



WILLOW CATKINS

The Concord Edition

EARLY SPRING IN
MASSACHUSETTS
AND
SUMMER

FROM THE JOURNAL OF
HENRY D. THOREAU

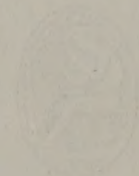


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MASSACHUSETTS
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EARLY SPRING IN MASSACHUSETTS

FROM THE JOURNAL OF
HENRY D. THOREAU

EDITED BY
H. G. O. BLAKE

EARLY SPRING IN MASSACHUSETTS

February 24, 1852. P. M. Railroad causeway. I am reminded of spring by the quality of the air. The cock-crowing and even the telegraph harp prophesy it, though the ground is for the most part covered with snow. It is a natural resurrection, an experience of immortality. . . . The telegraph harp reminds me of Anacreon. That is the glory of Greece, that we are reminded of her only when in our best estate, — our elysian days, — when our senses are young and healthy again. I could find a name for every strain or intonation of the harp from one or other of the Grecian bards. I often hear Mimmernus; often, Menander.

I am too late by a day or two for the sand foliage on the east side of the Deep Cut. It is glorious to see the soil again here where a shovel perchance will enter it and find no frost. The frost is partly come out of this bank, and it has become dry again in the sun. The very sound of men's work reminds, advertises, me of the coming of spring, as I now hear the

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laborer's sledge on the rails. . . . As we grow older, is it not ominous that we have more to write about evening, less about morning? We must associate more with the early hours.

February 24, 1854. P. M. To Walden and Fair Haven. Nuthatches are faintly answering each other, tit for tat, on different keys — a faint creak. Now and then one utters a loud, distinct *quah*. This bird, more than any other I know, loves to stand with its head downward; meanwhile, chickadees, with their silver tinkling, are flitting high above through the tops of the pines. . . . Observed in one of the little pond holes between Walden and Fair Haven where a partridge had traveled around in the snow, amid the bordering bushes, twenty-five rods; had pecked the green leaves of the lamb-kill, and left fragments on the snow, and had paused at each high blueberry bush, and shaken down fragments of its bark on the snow. The buds appeared to be its main object. I finally scared the bird.

February 24, 1855. The brightening of the willow or of osiers, that is a season in the spring, showing that the dormant sap is awakened. I now remember a few osiers which I have seen early in past springs, thus brilliantly green and red, and it is as if all the landscape shone. Though the twigs were few that I saw,

I remember it as a prominent phenomenon affecting the face of Nature, a gladdening of her face. You will often fancy that they look brighter before the spring has come, and when there has been no change in them. Thermometer at 10° at 10 P. M.

February 24, 1857. A fine spring morning. The ground is almost completely bare again. There has been a frost in the night. Now at half past eight it is melted and wets my feet like a dew. The water on the meadow this still bright morning is smooth as in April. I am surprised to hear the strain of a song-sparrow from the river side, and as I cross from the causeway to the hill, thinking of the bluebird, I that instant hear one's note from deep in the softened air. It is already 40° . By noon it is between 50° and 60° . As the day advances I hear more bluebirds, and see their azure flakes settling on the fence posts. Their short rich warble curls through the air. Its grain now lies parallel to the bluebird's warble, like boards of the same lot. It seems to be one of those early springs of which we have heard, but which we have never experienced.

I have seen the probings of skunks for a week or more. I now see where one has pawed out the worm dust or chankings from a hole in the base of a walnut, and torn open the fungi, etc.,

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exploring for grubs or insects. They are very busy these nights.

If I should make the least concession my friend would spurn me. I am obeying his law as well as my own.

Where is the actual friend you love? Ask from what hill the rainbow's arch springs! It adorns and crowns the earth. Our friends are our kindred, of our species. There are but few of our species on the globe. Between me and my friend what unfathomable distance! All mankind, like water and insects, are between us. If my friend says in his mind, I will *never* see you again, I translate it, of necessity, into *ever*. That is its definition in Love's lexicon. Those we can love we can hate. To others we are indifferent.

P. M. To Walden. The railroad in the Deep Cut is dry as in spring, almost dusty. The best of the sand foliage is already gone. I walk without a great coat. A chickadee, with its winter lisp, flits over. I think it is time to hear its phebe note, and that instant it pipes it forth. Walden is still covered with thick ice, though melted a foot from the shore. The French (in the Jesuit Relation) say "*fil de l'eau*" for that part of the current of a river in which any floating thing would be carried, generally about equidistant from the two banks.

It is a convenient expression for which I think we have no equivalent.

February 24, 1858. I see rhodora in bloom in a pitcher with water andromeda. Went through that long swamp northeast of Boaz's Meadow. Interesting and peculiar are the clumps and masses of panicled andromeda, with light brown stems, topped uniformly with very distinct, yellow-brown recent shoots, ten or twelve inches long, with minute red buds sleeping close along them. This uniformity in such masses gives a pleasing tinge to the swamp's surface. Wholesome colors which wear well. I see quite a number of emperor moths' cocoons attached to this shrub, some hung round with a loose mass of leaves as big as my two fists. What art in the red-eye to make these two adjacent maple twigs serve for the rim of its pensile basket, inweaving them! Surely it finds a place for itself in nature, between the two twigs of a maple.

On the side of the meadow moraine, just north of the boulder field, I see barberry bushes three inches in diameter and ten feet high. What a surprising color this wood has. It splits and splinters very much when I bend it. I cut a cane, and, shaving off the outer bark, find it of imperial yellow, as if painted, — fit for a Chinese mandarin.

February 25, 1859. Measure your health by your sympathy with morning and spring. If there is no response in you to the awakening of nature, if the prospect of an early morning walk does not banish sleep, if the warble of the first bluebird does not thrill you, know that the morning and spring of your life are past. Thus may you feel your pulse.

I heard this morning a nuthatch in the elms on the street. I think they are heard oftener at the approach of spring, just as the phebe note of the chickadee is, and so their *quah quah* is a herald of the spring.

A good book is not made in the cheap and off-hand manner of many of our scientific reports, ushered in by the message of the President communicating it to Congress, and the order of Congress that many thousand copies be printed with the letters of instruction from the Secretary of the Interior (or rather exterior); the bulk of the book being a journal of a picnic or sporting expedition by a brevet lieutenant colonel, illustrated by photographs of the traveler's footsteps across the plains, and an admirable engraving of his native village as it appeared on his leaving it, and followed by an appendix on the paleontology of the route by a distinguished savant who was not there; the last illustrated by very finely executed engrav-

ings of some old broken shells picked up on the road.

There are several men of whose comings and goings the town knows little, — I mean the trappers. They may be seen coming from the woods and river, perhaps with nothing in their hands, and you do not suspect what they have been about. They go about their business in a stealthy manner for fear that any should see where they set their traps, for the fur-trade still flourishes here. Every year they visit the out-of-the-way swamps and meadows and brooks to set and examine their traps for musquash and mink, and the owners of the land commonly know nothing of it. But few as the trappers are here, it seems by Goodwin's accounts that they steal one another's traps.

All the criticism I got on my lecture on "Autumnal Tints," at Worcester, on the 22d, was that I presumed my audience had not seen so much of them as they had. But after reading it I am more than ever convinced that they have not seen much of them, that there are very few persons who do see much of nature.

February 25, 1860. The fields of open water amid the thin ice of the meadows are the spectacle to-day. They are especially dark blue when I look southwest. Has it anything to do with the direction of the wind? It is pleasant

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to see high, dark blue waves half a mile off, running incessantly along the edge of white ice. There the motion of the blue liquid is the most distinct. As the waves rise and fall they seem to run swiftly along the edge of the ice.

For a day or two past I have seen in various places the small tracks of skunks. They appear to come out commonly in the warmer weather in the latter part of February.

I noticed yesterday the first conspicuous silvery sheen from the needles of the white pine waving in the wind. A small one was conspicuous by the side of the road, more than a quarter of a mile ahead. I suspect that those plumes which have been oppressed or contracted by snow and ice are not only dried, but opened and spread by the wind.

Those peculiar tracks which I saw some time ago, and still see, made in slosh, and since frozen at the andromeda ponds, I think must be mole tracks, and those "nicks" on the sides are where they shoved back the snow with their vertical flippers. This is a very peculiar track, a broad channel in slosh and at length in ice.

February 26, 1840. The most important events make no stir on their first taking place, nor indeed in their effects directly. They seem hedged about by secrecy. It is concussion or the rushing together of air to fill a vacuum

which makes a noise. The great events to which all things consent, and for which they have prepared the way, produce no explosion, for they are gradual, and create no vacuum which requires to be filled. As a birth takes place in silence, and is whispered about the neighborhood, but an assassination, which is at war with the constitution of things, creates a tumult immediately.

February 26, 1841. My prickles or smoothness are as much a quality of your hand as of myself. I cannot tell you what I am more than a ray of the summer's sun. What I am, I am, and say not. Being is the great explainer. In the attempt to explain, shall I plane away all the spines till it is no thistle, but a cornstalk?

If my world is not sufficient without thee, my friend, I will wait till it is, and then call thee. You shall come to a palace, not to an almshouse.

To be great we do as if we would be tall merely, longer than we are broad, stretch ourselves and stand on tiptoe. But greatness is well-proportioned, unstrained, and stands on the soles of the feet.

In composition I miss the hue of the mind, as if we could be satisfied with the dews of the morning and evening without their colors, or

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the heavens without their azure. This good book helps the sun shine in my chamber. The rays fall on its page as if to explain and illustrate it. I, who have been sick, hear cattle low in the street with such a healthy ear as prophesies my cure. These sounds lay a finger on my pulse to some purpose. A fragrance comes in at all my senses which proclaims that I am still of nature, the child. The threshing in yonder barn and the tinkling of the anvil come from the same side of Styx with me. If I were a physician I would try my patients thus: I would wheel them to a window and let nature feel their pulses. It will soon appear if their sensuous existence is sound. These sounds are but the throbbing of some pulse in me. Nature seems to have given me these hours to pry into her private drawers. I watch the insensible perspiration rising from my coat or hand on the wall. I go and feel my pulse in all the recesses of the house, and see if I am of force to carry a homely life and comfort into them.

February 26, 1852. We are told to-day that civilization is making rapid progress; the tendency is ever upward, substantial justice is done even by human courts. You may trust the good intentions of mankind. We read to-morrow in the newspapers that France is on the

eve of going to war with England to give employment to her army. This Russian war is popular. What is the influence of men of principle? or how numerous are they? How many moral teachers has society? Of course so many as she has will resist her. How many resist her? How many have I heard speak with warning voice? The preacher's standard of morality is no higher than that of his audience. He studies to conciliate his hearers, and never to offend them. Does the threatened war between France and England evince any more enlightenment than a war between two savage tribes, the Iroquois and Hurons? Is it founded in better reason?

February 26, 1855. Directly off Clam-shell Hill, within four rods of it, where the water is three or four feet deep, I see where the musquash dived and brought up clams before the last freezing. Their open shells are strewn along close to the edge of the ice, and close together for about three rods in one place, and the bottom under the edge of the older ice, as seen through the new black ice, is perfectly white with those which sank. They may have been blown in, or the ice may have melted. The nacre of these freshly opened shells is very fair, azure, or else a delicate salmon pink (?), or rosaceous, or violet. I find one not opened.

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but frozen, and several have one valve quite broken in two in the rat's effort to wrench them open, leaving the frozen fish half exposed. All the rest show the marks of their teeth at one end or the other. You can see distinctly also the marks of their teeth where with a scraping cut they have scraped off the tough muscle which fastens the fish to its shell, also sometimes all along the nacre next the edge. . . . These shells lie thickly around the edge of each small circle of thinner black ice in the midst of the white, showing where was open water a day or two ago. At the beginning and end of winter, when the river is partly open, the ice thus serves the muskrat instead of other stool. . . . Hence it appears that this is still a good place for clams as it was in Indian days.

February 26, 1857. What an accursed land, methinks unfit for the habitation of man, where the wild animals are monkeys!

February 27, 1841. Life looks as fair at this moment as a summer's sea . . . like a Persian city or hanging gardens in the distance, so washed in light, so untried, only to be thriddled by clean thoughts. All its flags are flowing and tassels streaming, and drapery flapping like some pavilion. The heavens hang over it like some low screen, and seem to undulate in the breeze. Through this pure, unwiped hour, as

through a crystal glass, I look out upon the future as a smooth lawn for my virtue to disport in. It shows from afar as unrepulsive as the sunshine upon walls and cities, over which the passing life moves as gently as a shadow. I see the course of my life, like some retired road, wind on without obstruction into a country maze. I am attired for the future so, as the sun setting presumes all men at leisure and in contemplative mood, and am thankful that it is thus presented blank and indistinct. It still o'ertops my life. My future deeds bestir themselves within me and move grandly towards a consummation, as ships go down the Thames. A steady onward motion I feel in me as still as that, or like some vast snowy cloud whose shadow first is seen across the fields. It is the material of all things, loose and set afloat, that makes my sea.

These various words are not without various meanings. The combined voice of the race makes nicer distinctions than any individual. There are the words diversion and amusement. It takes more to amuse than to divert. We must be surrendered to our amusements, but only turned aside to our diversions. We have no will in the former, but oversee the latter. We are oftenest diverted in the street, but amused in our chambers. We are diverted

from our engagements, but amused when we are listless. We may be diverted from an amusement, and amused by a diversion. It often happens that a diversion becomes our amusement, and an amusement our employment.

February 27, 1851. Of two men, one of whom knows nothing about a subject, and, what is extremely rare, knows that he knows nothing, and the other really knows something about it, but thinks that he knows all, what great advantage has the latter over the former? which is the better to deal with? I do not know that knowledge amounts to anything more definite than a novel and grand surprise on a sudden revelation of the insufficiency of all we had called knowledge before, an indefinite sense of the grandeur and glory of the universe. It is a lighting up of the mist by the sun. But man cannot be said to know, in the highest sense, any better than he can look serenely and with impunity in the face of the sun.

How when a man purchases a thing, he is determined to get and get hold of it, using how many expletives and how long a string of synonymous or similar terms signifying possession in the legal process. What's mine's my own. An old deed of a small piece of swamp land, which I have lately surveyed at the risk of being mired past recovery, says that "the said

Spaulding, his heirs and assigns, shall and may from this (?) time, and at all times forever hereafter, by force and virtue of these presents, lawfully, peaceably, and quietly have, hold, use, occupy, possess, and enjoy the said swamp," etc.

The following bears on the floating ice which has risen from the bottom of the meadows. Robert Hunt says, "Water conducts heat downward but very slowly; a mass of ice will remain undissolved but a few inches under water on the surface of which ether or any other inflammable body is burning. If ice swam beneath the surface the summer sun would scarcely have power to thaw it, and thus our lakes and seas would be gradually converted into solid masses."

Nature and man; some prefer one, others the other. But that is all "*de gustibus.*" It makes no odds at what well you drink, provided it be a well-head.

Walking in the woods, it may be some afternoon, the shadow of the wings of a thought flits across the landscape of my mind, and I am reminded how little eventful are our lives. What have been all these wars and rumors of wars, and modern discoveries and improvements, so called? A mere irritation in the skin. But this shadow which is so soon past,

and whose substance is not detected, suggests that there are events of importance whose interval is to us a true historic period.

The lecturer is wont to describe the nineteenth century, the American of the last generation, in an off-hand and triumphant strain, wafting him to Paradise, spreading his fame by steam and telegraph, recounting the number of wooden stopples he has whittled. But he does not perceive that this is not a sincere or pertinent account of any man's or nation's life. It is the hip-hip-hurrah and mutual admiration society style. Cars go by and we know their substance as well as their shadow! They stop and we get into them. But those sublime thoughts, passing on high, do not stop, and we never get into them. Their conductor is not like one of us.

I feel that the man who, in his conversation with me about the life of man in New England, lays much stress on railroads, telegraphs, and such enterprises does not go below the surface of things. . . . In one of the mind's avatars, in the interval between sleeping and waking, ay, in one of the interstices of a Hindoo dynasty, perchance, such things as the nineteenth century, with all its improvements, may come and go again. Nothing makes a deep and lasting impression but what is weighty. . . . He

who lives according to the highest law is in one sense lawless. That is an unfortunate discovery, certainly, that of a law which binds us where we did not know that we were bound. Live free, child of the mist. He for whom the law is made, who does not obey the law, but whom the law obeys, reclines on pillows of down, and is wafted at will whither he pleases; for man is superior to all laws, both of heaven and earth, when he takes his liberty.

February 27, 1852. The main river is not yet open except in very few places, but the north branch, which is so much more rapid, is open near Tarbell's and Harrington's, where I walked to-day, and flowing with full tide, bordered with ice on either side, sparkles in the clear, cool air, — a silvery sparkle as from a stream that would not soil the sky. . . . We have almost completely forgotten the summer. This restless and now swollen stream has burst its icy fetters, and as I stand looking up it westward for half a mile, where it winds slightly under a high bank, its surface is lit up here and there with a fine-grained silvery sparkle which makes the river appear something celestial, more than a terrestrial river, which might have suggested that one surrounding the shield in Homer. If rivers come out of their prison thus bright and immortal, shall not I, too, re-

sume my spring life with joy and hope? Have I no hopes to sparkle on the surface of life's current? It is worth while to have our faith revived by seeing where a river swells and eddies about a half-buried rock.

February 27, 1853. A week or two ago I brought home a handsome pitch pine cone, which had freshly fallen, and was closed perfectly tight. It was put into a table-drawer. To-day I am agreeably surprised that it has there dried and opened with perfect regularity, filling the drawer; and from a solid, narrow and sharp cone has become a broad, rounded, open one, — has, in fact, expanded into a conical flower with rigid scales, and has shed a remarkable quantity of delicate winged seeds. Each scale, which is very elaborately and perfectly constructed, is armed with a short spine pointing downward, as if to protect its seeds from squirrels and birds. That hard, closed cone, which defied all violent attempts to open it, and could only be cut open, has thus yielded to the gentle persuasion of warmth and dryness. The expanding of the pine cones, that, too, is a season.

February 27, 1854. . . . I remarked yesterday the rapidity with which water flowing over the icy ground sought its level. All that rain would hardly have produced a puddle in mid-

summer, but now it produces a freshet, and will perhaps break up the river.

February 27, 1856. The papers are talking about the prospect of war between England and America. Neither side sees how its country can avoid a long and fratricidal war without sacrificing its honor. Both nations are ready to take a desperate step, to forget the interests of civilization and Christianity and their commercial prosperity, and fly at each other's throats. When I see an individual thus beside himself, thus desperate, ready to shoot or be shot like a blackleg, who has little to lose, no serene aims to accomplish, I think he is a candidate for bedlam. What asylum is there for nations to go to?

Nations are thus ready to talk of wars and challenge one another because they are made up, to such an extent, of poor, low-spirited, despairing men, in whose eyes the chance of shooting somebody else, without being shot themselves, exceeds their actual good fortune. Who, in fact, will be the first to enlist but the most desperate class, they who have lost all hope? And they may at last infect the rest. Will not war, at length, be thought disreputable, like dueling between individuals?

February 27, 1857. Before I opened the window this cold morning I heard the peep of a

robin, that sound which is often heard in cheerless or else rainy weather, so often heard first borne on the cutting March wind, or through sleet or rain, as if its coming were premature.

February 27, 1858. . . . The hedges on the hill are all cut off. The journals think they cannot say too much on improvements in husbandry. But as for one of these farms brushed up, — a model farm, — I had as lief see a patent churn and a man turning it. It is simply a place where somebody is making money.

I see a snow bunting, though it is pleasant and warm.

February 27, 1859. P. M. To Cliffs; though it was a dry, powdery snow storm yesterday, the sun is now so high that the snow is soft and sticky this P. M. The sky, too, is soft to look at, and the air to feel on my cheek.

Health makes the poet, or sympathy with nature, a good appetite for his food, which is constantly renewing him, — whetting his senses. Pay for your victuals then with poetry, give back *life for life*.

February 27, 1860. 2 P. M. To Abner Buttrick's Hill. . . . I walk down by the river below Flint's, on the north side. The sudden apparition of the dark blue water on the surface of the earth is exciting. I must now walk where I can see the most water, as to the most

living part of nature. This is the blood of the earth, and we see its blue arteries pulsing with new life now. I see from far over the meadows white cakes of ice gliding swiftly down the stream, — a novel sight. They are whiter than ever in this spring sun.

The abundance of light, as reflected from clouds and the snow, etc., etc., is more spring-like than anything else of late. . . . I had noticed for some time, far in the middle of the great meadows, something dazzling white, which I took, of course, to be a small cake of ice on its end; but now that I have climbed the pitch pine hill, and can overlook the whole meadow, I see it to be the white breast of a small shel-drake, accompanied, perhaps, by its mate, a darker one. They have settled warily in the very midst of the meadow, where the wind has blown a space of clear water for an acre or two. The aspect of the meadow is sky blue and dark blue, the former a thin ice, the latter the spaces of open water which the wind has made; but it is chiefly ice still. Thus as soon as the river breaks up, or begins to break up fairly, and the strong wind, widening the cracks, makes at length open spaces in the ice of the meadow, this hardy bird appears, and is seen sailing in the first widened crack in the ice where it can come at the water. Instead of a piece of ice I

find it to be the breast of the sheldrake which so reflects the light as to look larger than it is, the bird steadily sailing this way and that with its companion, who is diving from time to time. They have chosen the opening farthest removed from all shores. As I look I see the ice drifting in upon them and contracting the water, till finally they have but a few square rods left, while there are forty or fifty acres near by. This is the first bird of the spring that I have seen or heard of.

February 28, 1841. Nothing goes by luck in composition; it allows of no trick. The best you can write will be the best you are. Every sentence is the result of a long probation. The author's character is read from title-page to end. Of this he never corrects the proofs. We read it as the essential character of a handwriting without regard to the flourishes. And so of the rest of our actions. It runs as straight as a ruled line through them all, no matter how many curvets about it. Our whole life is taxed for the least thing well done. It is its net result. How we eat, drink, sleep, and use our desultory hours now in these indifferent days, with no eye to observe and no occasion to excite us, determines our authority and capacity for the time to come.

February 28, 1852. To-day it snows again,

covering the ground. To get the value of the storm, we must be out a long time and travel far in it, so that it may fairly penetrate our skin, and we be, as it were, turned inside out to it, and there be no part in us but is wet or weather-beaten, so that we become storm men, instead of fair-weather men. Some men speak of having been wet to the skin once as a memorable event in their lives, which, notwithstanding the croakers, they survived.

February 28, 1855. I observed how a new ravine was formed in that last thaw at Clamshell Hill. Much melted snow and rain being collected on the top of the hill, some apparently found its way through the ground frozen a foot thick, a few feet from the edge of the bank, and began with a small rill washing down the slope the unfrozen sand beneath. As the water continued to flow, the sand on each side continued to slide into it and be carried off, leaving the frozen crust above quite firm, making a bridge five or six feet wide over this cavern. Now since the thaw, this bridge, I see, has melted and fallen in, leaving a ravine some ten feet wide and much longer, which now may go on increasing from year to year without limit. I was there just after it began.

February 28, 1856. How simple the machinery of a saw-mill. M—— has dammed a

stream, raised a pond or head of water, and placed an old horizontal mill-wheel in position to receive a jet on its buckets, transferred the motion to a horizontal shaft and saw, by a few cog-wheels and simple gearing; then throwing a roof of slabs over all, at the outlet of the pond, you have a mill. . . . A weight of water stored upon a meadow, applied to move a saw, which scratches its way through the trees placed before it, so simple is a saw-mill.

February 28, 1857. It is a singular infatuation that leads men to become clergymen in regular or even irregular standing. I pray to be introduced to new men at whom I may stop short and taste their peculiar sweetness. But in the clergyman of the most liberal sort I see no perfectly independent human nucleus, but I seem to see some indistinct scheme hovering about, to which he has lent himself, to which he belongs. It is a very fine cobweb in the lower stratum of the air, which stronger wings do not even discover. Whatever he may say, he does not know that one day is as good as another. Whatever he may say, he does not know that a man's creed can never be written, that there are no particular expressions of worship that deserve to be prominent. He dreams of a certain sphere to be filled by him something less in diameter than a great circle, may be not greater

than a hogshead. All the staves are got out, and his sphere is already hooped. What's the use of talking to him? When you spoke of sphere music, he thought only of a thumping on his cask. If he does not know something that nobody else does, that nobody told him, then he's a tell-tale.

February 28, 1860. Passed a very little boy in the street to-day who had on a home-made cap of a woodchuck's skin, which his father or older brother had killed and cured, and his mother or older sister had fashioned into a nice warm cap. I was interested by the sight of it, it suggested so much of family history, adventure with the chuck, story told about it, not without exaggeration, the human parents, care of their young these hard times. Johnny had been promised a cap many times, and now the work was completed. A perfect little Idyl, as they say. The cap was large and round, big enough, you would say, for the boy's father, and had some kind of cloth visor stitched to it. The top of the cap was evidently the back of the woodchuck, as it were, expanded in breadth, contracted in length, and it was as fresh and handsome as if the woodchuck wore it himself. The great gray-tipped hairs were all preserved and stood out above the brown ones, only a little more loosely than in life. As if he had put

his head into the belly of a woodchuck, having cut off his tail and legs, and substituted a visor for the head. The little fellow wore it innocently enough, not knowing what he had on forsooth, going about his small business pit-a-pat, and his black eyes sparkled beneath it when I remarked on its warmth, even as the woodchuck's might have done. Such should be the history of every piece of clothing that we wear.

As I stood by Eagle Field wall, I heard a fine rattling sound from some dry weeds at my elbow. It was occasioned by the wind rattling the fine seeds in those pods of the indigo-weed which were still closed, a distinct rattling din which drew my attention, like a small Indian calabash. Not a mere rustling of dry weeds, but the shaking of a rattle or a hundred rattles. . . .

As it is important to consider nature from the point of view of science, remembering the nomenclature and systems of men, and so, if possible, go a step further in that direction, so it is equally important often to ignore or forget all that men presume that they know, and take an original and unprejudiced view of Nature, letting her make what impression she will on you, as the first men, and all children, and natural men do. For our science, so called, is

always more barren and mixed with error than our sympathies are.

As I go down the Boston road I see an Irishman wheeling home from far a large, damp, and rotten pine log for fuel. He evidently sweats at it and pauses to rest many times. He found, perhaps, that his woodpile was gone before the winter was, and he trusts thus to contend with the remaining cold. I see him unload it in his yard before me, and then rest himself. The piles of solid oak wood which I see in other yards do not interest me at all, but this looked like fuel. It warmed me to think of it. He will now proceed to split it finely, and then I fear it will require about as much heat to dry it as it will give out at last. How rarely we are encouraged by the sight of simple actions in the street. We deal with banks and other institutions where the life and humanity are concealed, what there is of it. I like at least to see the great beams half exposed in the ceiling or the corner.

February 28, 1861. P. M. Down Boston road under the hill. Air full of bluebirds, as yesterday. The sidewalk is bare and almost dry the whole distance under the hill. Turn in at the gate this side of Moore's, and sit on one of the yellowish stones rolled down in the bay of a digging, and examine the radical

leaves, etc., etc. Where the edges of grassy banks have caved I see the fine fibrous roots of the grass, which have been washed bare during the winter, extending straight downward two feet (and how much further within the earth I know not), a pretty dense, grayish mass.

February 29, 1840. A friend advises by his whole behavior, and never condescends to particulars. Another chides away a fault; he loves it away. While he sees the other's error, he is silently conscious of it, and only the more loves truth itself, and assists his friend in loving it till the fault is expelled and gently extinguished.

February 29, 1852. Simplicity is the law of nature for men as well as for flowers. When the tapestry (corolla) of the nuptial bed (calyx) is excessive, luxuriant, it is unproductive. Linnæus says, "Luxuriant flowers are none natural, but all monsters," and so, for the most part, abortive, and when proliferous "they but increase the monstrous deformity." "Luxurians flos tegmenta fructificationis ita multiplicat ut essentielles equidem partes destruantur." "Oritur luxurians flos plerumque ab alimento luxuriante." Such a flower has no true progeny, and can only be reproduced by the humble mode of cuttings from its stem or roots.

“*Anthophilorum et hortulanorum deliciae sunt flores pleni*,” not of nature. The fertile flowers are single, not double.

P. M. To Pine Hill across Walden. The high wind takes off the oak leaves. I see them scrambling up the slopes of the Deep Cut, hurry scurry like a flock of squirrels. . . . For the past month there has been more sea-room in the day, without so great danger of running aground on one of those two promontories that make it so arduous to navigate the winter day, the morning or the evening. It is a narrow pass, and you must go through with the tide. Might not some of my pages be called the short days of winter?

From Pine Hill looking westward I see the snow-crust shine in the sun as far as the eye can reach, — snow which fell yesterday morning. Then before night came the rain, then in the night the freezing northwest wind, and where day before yesterday half the ground was bare, is this sheeny snow-crust to-day.

March 1, 1838. Spring. March fans it, April christens it, and May puts on its jacket and trousers. It never grows up, but, Alexandrine-like, “drags its slow length along,” — ever springing, bud following close upon leaf, — and when winter comes it is not annihilated, but creeps on mole-like under the snow, show-

ing its face, nevertheless, occasionally by fuming springs and watercourses. So let our manhood be a more advanced and still advancing youth, bud following hard upon leaf. By the side of the ripening corn let's have a second or third crop of peas and turnips, decking the fields in a new green. So amid clumps of sere herd's-grass sometimes flower the violet and buttercups, spring-born.

March 1, 1842. Whatever I learn from any circumstance, that especially I needed to know. Events come out of God, and our characters determine them and constrain fate as much as they determine the words and tone of a friend to us. Hence are they always acceptable in experience, and we do not see how we could have done without them.

March 1, 1854. Here is our first spring morning according to the almanac. It is remarkable that the spring of the almanac and of nature should correspond so closely. The morning of the 26th ult. was good winter; but then came a plentiful rain in the afternoon, and yesterday and to-day are quite spring-like. This morning the air is still, and, though clear enough, a yellowish light is widely diffused through the east now, just after sunrise. The sunlight looks and feels warm, and a fine vapor fills the lower atmosphere. I hear the phebe

or spring note of the chickadee, and the scream of the jay is perfectly repeated by the echo from a neighboring wood. For some days past the surface of the earth, covered with water or with ice where the snow is washed off, has shone in the sun as it does only at the approach of spring, methinks, and are not the frosts in the morning more like the early frosts in the fall, — common white frosts? As for the birds of the past winter, I have seen but three hawks, one early in the winter, two lately; have heard the hooting owl pretty often late in the afternoon. Crows have not been numerous, but their cawing was heard chiefly in the pleasanter mornings. Blue-jays have blown the trumpet of winter as usual, but they, as all birds, are most lively in spring-like days. The chickadees have been the *prevailing* bird. The partridge common enough. One ditcher tells me that he saw two robins in Moore's swamp a month ago. I have not seen a quail, though a few have been killed in the thaws, — four or five downy woodpeckers. The white-breasted nuthatch four or five times. Tree-sparrows, one or more at a time, oftener than any bird that comes to us from the north. Two pigeon-woodpeckers, I think, lately. One dead shrike and perhaps one or two live ones. Have heard of two white owls, one about Thanksgiving time

and one in midwinter; one short-eared owl in December; several flocks of snow buntings in the severest storm in the last part of December; one grebe in Walden, just before it froze completely, and two brown creepers once in the middle of February. C—— says he saw a little olivaceous green bird lately. I have not seen a *Fringilla linaria*, nor a pine grossbeak, nor a *Fringilla hiemalis* this winter, though the first was the prevailing bird last winter.

In correcting my MSS., which I do with sufficient phlegm, I find that I invariably turn out much that is good along with the bad, which it is then impossible for me to distinguish, — so much for keeping bad company; but after a lapse of time, having purified the main body and thus created a distinct standard for comparison, I can review the rejected sentences, and easily detect those which deserve to be readmitted.

P. M. To Walden by R. W. E.'s. I am surprised to see how bare Minott's hillside is already. It is spring there, and M. is puttering outside in the sun. How wise in his grandfather to select such a site for a house; the summers he has lived there have been so much longer. How pleasant the calm season and the warmth (the sun is even like a burning-glass on my back), and the sight and sound of melting

snow running down the hill. I look in among the withering grass blades for some starting greenness. I listen to hear the first bluebird in the soft air. I hear the dry clucking of hens which have come abroad. The ice at Walden is softened. With a stick you can loosen it to the depth of an inch, or the first freezing, and turn it up in cakes. Yesterday you could skate here, now only close to the south shore. I notice the redness of the andromeda leaves, but not so much as once. The sand foliage is now in its prime.

March 1, 1855. It is a very pleasant and warm day, the finest yet, with considerable coolness in the air, however. Winter still. The air is beautifully clear, and through it I love to trace at a distance the roofs and outlines of sober-colored farm-houses amid the woods. We go listening for bluebirds, but only hear crows and chickadees. A fine seething air over the fair russet fields. The dusty banks of snow by the railroad reflect a wonderfully dazzling white from their pure crannies, being melted into an uneven, sharp-wavy surface. This more dazzling white must be due to the higher sun.

March 1, 1856. 9 A. M. To Flint's Pond *via* Walden, by railroad and the crust. I hear the hens cackle as not before for many months. Are they not beginning to lay? The catkins of

the willow by the causeway and of the aspens appear to have pushed out a little farther than a month ago. I see the down of half a dozen on that willow by the causeway, on the aspens pretty generally. As I go through the cut it is still, warm, and more or less sunny, spring-like (about 40°); and the sand and reddish subsoil is bare for about a rod in width on the railroad. I hear several times the fine-drawn phebe note of the chickadee, which I heard only once during the winter. . . . It is remarkable that though I have not been able to find any open place in the river almost all winter, except under the further stone bridge and at Loring's Pond, this winter so remarkable for ice and snow, yet Coombs should (as he says) have killed two sheldrakes at the falls of the factory, a place which I had forgotten, — some four or six weeks ago; singular that this hardy bird should have found that small opening which I had forgotten, while the ice everywhere else was from one to two feet thick, and the snow sixteen inches on a level. If there is a crack amid the rocks of some waterfall, this bright diver is sure to know it. Ask the sheldrake whether the rivers are completely sealed up.

March 1, 1860. I have thoughts, as I walk, on some subject that is running in my head, but all their pertinence seems gone before I can

get home to set them down. The most valuable thoughts which I entertain are anything but what *I* thought. Nature abhors a vacuum, and if I can only walk with sufficient carelessness, I am sure to be filled.

March 2, 1840. Love is the burden of all nature's odes, the song of the birds is an epithalamium, a hymeneal. The marriage of the flowers spots the meadows and fringes the hedges with pearls and diamonds. In the deep water, in the high air, in woods and pastures, and the bowels of the earth, this is the employment and condition of all things.

March 2, 1852. If the sciences are protected from being carried by assault by a palisade or chevaux-de-frise of technical terms, so also the learned man may ensconce himself and conceal his little true knowledge behind hard names. Perhaps the value of any statement may be increased by its susceptibility of being expressed in popular language. The greatest discoveries can be reported in the newspapers. I thought it was a great advantage both to speakers and hearers, when, at the meetings of scientific gentlemen at the Marlborough Chapel, the representatives of one department of science were required to speak intelligibly to those of other departments; therefore dispensing with the most peculiarly technical terms. A man may

be permitted to state a very meagre truth to a fellow-student using technical terms, but when he stands up before the mass of men he must have some distinct and important truth to communicate, and the most important it will always be the most easy to communicate to the vulgar.

If anybody thinks a thought, how sure we are to hear of it. Though it be only a half thought or half a delusion, it gets into the newspapers, and all the country rings with it. But how much clearing of land, and ploughing and planting, and building of stone wall is done every summer without being reported in the newspapers or in literature. Agricultural literature is not as extensive as the fields, and the farmer's almanac is never a big book. Yet I think that the history (or poetry) of one farm from a state of nature to the highest state of cultivation comes nearer to being the true subject of a modern epic than the siege of Jerusalem or any such paltry and ridiculous romance to which some have thought men reduced. Was it Coleridge who said that the "Works and Days" of Hesiod, the Eclogues and Georgics of Virgil, are but leaves out of that epic? The turning of a swamp into a garden, though the poet may not think it an improvement, is at any rate an enterprise interesting to all men.

A wealthy farmer, who has money to let, was here yesterday, who said that fourteen years ago a man came to him to hire two hundred dollars for thirty days. He told him that he should have it if he would give proper security. But the other, thinking it exorbitant to require security for so short a term, went away. He soon returned, however, and gave the security; "and," said the farmer, "he has punctually paid me twelve dollars a year ever since. I have never said a word to him about the principal."

March 2, 1854. What produces the peculiar softness of the air yesterday and to-day, as if it were the air of the south suddenly pillowed amid our wintry hills? We have suddenly a different sky, a different atmosphere. It is as if the subtlest possible soft vapor were diffused through the atmosphere. Warm air has come to us from the south, but charged with moisture which will yet distill into rain or congeal into snow and hail.

March 2, 1855. Another still, warm, beautiful day, like yesterday. 9 A. M. To Great Meadows to see the ice. These meadows, like all the rest, are one great field of ice a foot thick, to their utmost verge far up the hillsides and into the swamps, sloping upward there, without water under it, resting almost everywhere

on the ground, a great undulating field of ice, rolling, prairie-like, the earth wearing this dry icy shield or armor, which shines in the sun. Over brooks and ditches, perhaps, and in many other places, the ice, sometimes a foot thick, is shoved (?) or puffed up in the form of a pent roof, in some places three feet high and stretching twenty or thirty rods. There is certainly more ice than could lie flat there, as if the adjacent masses had been moved toward each other. Yet this general motion is not likely, and it is more probably the result of the expansion of the ice under the sun, and of the warmth of the water (?) there. In many places the ice is dark and transparent, and you see plainly the bottom on which it lies. The various figures in the partially rotted ice are very interesting, white bubbles, which look like coins of various sizes overlapping each other, parallel waving lines, with sometimes very slight intervals on the underside of sloping white ice, marking the successive levels at which the water has stood; also countless white cleavages, perpendicular or inclined, straight and zigzag, meeting and crossing each other at all possible angles, and making all kinds of geometrical figures, checkering the whole surface like white frills or ruffles in the ice. At length it melts on the edge of these cleavages into little gutters which catch

the snow. There is the greatest noise from the cracking of the ice about 10 A. M., as I noticed yesterday and to-day.

Where the last year's shoots or tops of the young white maples are brought together, as I walk toward a mass of them, one quarter of a mile off, with the sun on them, they present a fine dull scarlet streak. Young twigs are thus more fluid than the old wood, as if from their nearness to the flower, or like the complexion of children. You see thus a fine dash of red or scarlet against the distant hills which near at hand, or in the midst, is wholly unobservable. I go listening, but in vain, for the warble of the bluebird from the old orchard across the river. I love to look now at the fine-grained russet hillsides in the sun, ready to relieve and contrast with the azure of the bluebirds. I made a burning-glass of ice which produced a slight sensation of warmth on the back of my hand, but was so untrue that it did not concentrate the rays to a sufficiently small focus. Returning over Great Fields found half a dozen arrowheads, one with three scallops in the base. . . . Heard two hawks scream. There was something truly March-like in it, like a prolonged blast or whistling of the wind through a crevice in the sky, which, like a cracked blue saucer, overlaps the woods. Such are the first

rude notes which prelude the summer's choir, learned of the whistling March wind.

March 2, 1856. Walking up the river by Prichard's was surprised to see on the snow over the river a great many seeds and scales of birches, though the snow had so recently fallen. There had been but little wind, and it was already spring. There was one seed or scale to a square foot, yet the nearest birches were, about fifteen of them, along the wall thirty rods east. As I advanced towards them the seeds became thicker and thicker till they quite discolored the snow half a dozen rods distant, while east of the birches there was not one. The birches appear not to have lost a quarter of their seeds yet. As I went home up the river, I saw some of the seeds forty rods off, and perhaps in a more favorable direction I might have found them much farther. It suggested how unwearied Nature is in spreading her seeds. Even the spring does not find her unprovided with birch, ay, and alder and pine seed. A great proportion of the seed that was carried to a distance lodged in the hollow over the river, and when the river breaks up will be carried far away to distant shores and meadows. . . .

I can hardly believe that hen-hawks may be beginning to build their nests now, yet their

young were a fortnight old the last of April last year.

March 2, 1858. I walk through the Colburn farm pine woods, and thence to rear of John Hosmer's. See a large flock of snow buntings, the white birds of the winter, rejoicing in the snow. I stand near a flock in an open field. They are trotting about briskly over the snow, amid the weeds, apparently pig-weed and Roman wormwood, as if to keep their toes warm hopping up to the weeds. Then they restlessly take to wing again, and as they wheel about one, it is a very rich sight to see them dressed in black and white uniforms, alternate black and white, very distinct and singular. Perhaps no colors would be more effective above the snow, black tips (considerably more) to wings, then clear white between this and the back, which is black or very dark again. . . . They alight again equally near. Their track is much like a small crow's track.

The last new journal thinks that it is very liberal, nay, bold; but it does not publish a child's thought on important subjects, such as life and death and good books. It requires the sanction of the divines just as surely as the tamest journal does. If it had been published at the time of the famous dispute between Christ and the doctors, it would have published

only the opinions of the doctors and suppressed Christ's. There is no need of a law to check the license of the press. It is law enough and more than enough to itself. Virtually the community must have come together and agreed what things shall be uttered, have agreed on a platform and to excommunicate him who departs from it, and not one in a thousand dares utter anything else. There are plenty of journals brave enough to say what they think about the government, this being a free one; but I know of none widely circulated or well conducted that dares say what it thinks about the Sunday or the Bible. They have been bribed to keep dark. They are in the service of hypocrisy.

March 2, 1859. We talk about spring as at hand before the end of February, and yet it will be two good months, one sixth part of the whole year, before we can go a-Maying. There may be a whole month of solid and uninterrupted winter yet, plenty of ice and good sleighing. We may not even see the bare ground, and hardly the water; and yet we sit down and warm our spirits annually with the distant prospect of spring. As if a man were to warm his hands by stretching them towards the rising sun and rubbing them. We listen to the February cock-crowing and turkey gobbling as to a first course or prelude. The bluebird, which

some woodchopper or inspired walker is said to have seen in that sunny interval between the snow storms, is like a speck of clear blue sky seen near the end of a storm, reminding us of an ethereal region, and a heaven which we had forgotten. Princes and magistrates are often styled serene, but what is their turbid serenity to that ethereal serenity which the bluebird embodies. His most serene Birdship! His soft warble melts in the ear as the snow is melting in the valleys around. The bluebird comes, and with his warble drills the ice, and sets free the rivers and ponds and frozen ground. As the sand flows down the slopes a little way, assuming the forms of foliage when the frost comes out of the ground, so this little rill of melody flows a short way down the concave of the sky.

The sharp whistle of the blackbird, too, is heard like single sparks, or a shower of them, shot up from the swamp and seen against the dark winter in the rear.

March 2, 1860. There is a strong westerly wind to-day, though warm, and we sit under Dennis's Lupine promontory to observe the water. A richer blue than the sky ever is. The flooded meadows are ripple lakes on a large scale. The bare landscape, though no growth is visible in it, is bright and spring-like.

There is the tawny earth (almost completely bare) of different shades, lighter or darker, the light very light in this air, more so than the surface of the earth ever is (*i. e.*, without snow), bleached, as it were, and in the hollows of it, set round by the tawny hills and banks, is this copious, living, and sparkling blue water of various shades. It is more dashing, rippling, sparkling, living this windy but clear day, never smooth, but ever varying in its degree of motion and depth of blue, as the wind is more or less strong, rising and falling. All along the shore next us is a strip a few feet wide of very light and smooth sky-blue, for so much is sheltered ever by the lowest shore, but the rest is all more or less agitated and dark blue. In it are floating or stationary, here and there, cakes of white ice, the least looking like ducks, and large patches of water have a dirty-white or even tawny look where the ice still lies on the bottom of the meadow. Thus even the meadow flood is parded, of various patches of color. Ever and anon the wind seems to drop down from over the hills in strong puffs, and then spread and diffuse itself in dark, fan-shaped figures over the surface of the water. It is glorious to see how it sports on the watery surface. You see a hundred such nimble-footed puffs drop and spread on all sides at once, and

dash on, sweeping the surface of the water for forty rods in a few seconds, as if so many invisible spirits were playing tag there. It even suggests some fine dust swept along just above the surface, and reminds me of snow blowing over ice—and vapor curling along a roof, meandering like that, often. The before dark blue is now diversified with much darker or blackish patches, with a suggestion of red, purplish even. . . . I am surprised to see that the billows which the wind makes are concentric curves, apparently reaching round from shore to shore of this broad bay forty rods wide or more. For this, two things may account, the greater force of the wind in the middle and the friction of the shores. When it blows hardest each successive billow (four or five feet apart or more) is crowned with a yellowish or dirty-white foam. The wind blows around each side of the hill, the opposite currents meeting, perchance, or it falls over the hill so that you have a field of ever-varying color, dark blue, blackish, yellowish, light blue, smooth sky-blue, purplish, and yellowish foam, all at once. Sometimes the wind visibly catches up the surface and blows it along and about in spray four or five feet high. The requisites are high water, mostly clear of ice, ground bare and sufficiently dry, weather warm enough, and wind strong

and gusty. Then you may sit or stand on a hill and watch the play of the wind with the water. I know of no checker-board more interesting to watch. The wind, the gusts, comb the hair of the water-nymphs. You never tire of seeing it drop, spread, and sweep over the yielding and sensitive surface. The water is full of life, now rising into higher billows which would make your mast crack if you had any, now subsiding into lesser, dashing against and wearing away the still anchored ice, setting many small cakes adrift. How they entertain us with ever-changing scenes in the sky above or on the earth below. If the ploughman lean on his plough handle and look up or down, there is danger that he will forget his labor on that day.

March 3, 1838. Homer. Three thousand years and the world so little changed. The Iliad seems like a natural sound which has reverberated to our days. Whatever in it is still freshest in the memories of men was most child-like in the poet. It is the problem of old age, a second childhood exhibited in the life of the world. Phœbus Apollo went like night, ὁ δ' ἦϊε νυκτὶ ἐοικώς. This either refers to the gross atmosphere of the plague, darkening the sun, or to the crescent of night, rising solemn and stately in the east, while the sun is setting in the west.

Then Agamemnon darkly lowers on Calchas, prophet of evil, ὅσσε δέ οἱ πυρὶ λαμπετόωντι ἔικτην, such a fire-eyed Agamemnon as you may see at town meetings and elections, as well here as in Troy neighborhood.

March 3, 1839. The poet must be something more than natural, even supernatural. Nature will not speak through him, but along with him. His voice will not proceed from her midst, but, breathing on her, will make her the expression of his thought. He then poetizes when he takes a fact out of nature into spirit. He speaks without reference to time or place. His thought is one world, hers, another. He is another nature, nature's brother.

March 3, 1841. I hear a man blowing a horn this still evening, and it sounds like the plaint of nature in these times. In this which I refer to some man there is something greater than any man. It is as if the earth spoke. It adds a great remoteness to the horizon, and its very distance is grand, as when one draws back the head to speak. That which I now hear in the west seems like an invitation to the east. It runs round the earth as round a whispering gallery. All things great seem transpiring where this sound comes from. It is friendly as a distant hermit's taper. When it trills or undulates, the heavens are crumpled into time,

and successive waves flow across them. It is a strangely healthy sound for these disjointed times. It is a rare soundness when cow-bells and horns are heard from over the fields. And now I see the full meaning and beauty of that word, sound. Nature always possesses a certain sonorousness, as in the hum of insects, the booming of ice, the crowing of cocks in the morning, and the barking of dogs in the night, which indicates her sound state. God's voice is but a clear bell sound. I drink in a wonderful health, a cordial, in sound. The effect of the slightest tinkling in the horizon measures my own soundness. I thank God for sound. It always mounts and makes me mount. I think I will not trouble myself for any wealth when I can be so cheaply enriched. Here I contemplate to drudge that I may own a farm, and may have such a limitless estate for the listening. All good things are cheap, all bad are very dear.

As for these communities, I think I had rather keep bachelor's hall in hell than go to board in heaven. Do not think your virtue will be boarded with you. It will never live on the interest of your money, depend upon it. The boarder has no home. In heaven I hope to bake my own bread and clean my own linen. The tomb is the only boarding-house in which

a hundred are served at once. In the catacombs we may dwell together and prop one another up without loss.

March 3, 1857. To Fair Haven Hill. 3 P. M. 24° + in shade. The red maple sap, which I first noticed the 21st of February, is now frozen up in the auger holes, and thence down the trunk to the ground, except in one place where the hole was made on the south side of the tree, where it is melted and is flowing a little. Generally, then, when the thermometer is thus low, say below freezing point, it does not thaw in the auger holes. There is no expanding of buds of any kind, nor are early birds to be seen. Nature was, thus, premature, anticipated her own revolutions with respect to the sap of trees, the buds (*spiræa*, at least), and birds. The warm spell ended with February 26th.

The crust of yesterday's snow has been converted by the sun and wind into flakes of thin ice from two or three inches to a foot in diameter, scattered like a mackerel sky over the pastures, as if all the snow had been blown out from beneath. Much of this thin ice is partly opaque and has a glutinous look even, reminding me of frozen glue. Probably it has much dust mixed with it. . . . The slight robin snow of yesterday is already mostly dissipated, but

where a heap still lingers the sun on the warm face of this cliff leads down a puny, trickling rill, moistening the gutters on the steep face of the rocks where patches of umbilicaria lichens grow, of rank growth, but now thirsty and dry as bones and hornets' nests, dry as shells which crackle under your feet. The more fortunate of these, which stand by the moistened seam or gutter of the rock, luxuriate in the grateful moisture as in the spring, their rigid nerves relax, they unbend and droop like limber infancy, and from dry ash and leather color turn a lively olive green. You can trace the course of this trickling stream over the rock through such a patch of lichens by the olive green of the lichens alone. Here and there the same moisture refreshes and brightens up the scarlet crown of some little cockscomb lichen, and when the rill reaches the perpendicular face of the cliff, its constant drip at night builds great organ pipes, of a ringed structure, which run together buttressing the rock. Skating yesterday and to-day.

March 3, 1859. Going by the solidago oak at Clam-shell Hill bank, I heard a faint rippling note, and looking up saw about fifteen snow buntings sitting in the top of the oak, all with their breasts toward me. Sitting so still, and quite white seen against the white cloudy

sky, they did not look like birds, and their boldness, allowing me to come quite near, enhanced this impression. They were almost as white as snow-balls, and from time to time I heard a low, soft, rippling note from them. I could see no features, but only the general outline of plump birds in white. It was a very spectral sight, and after I had watched them for several minutes I can hardly say that I was prepared to see them fly away like ordinary buntings when I advanced further. At first they were almost concealed by being the same color with the cloudy sky. . . .

How imperceptibly the first springing takes place! In some still, muddy springs whose temperature is more equable than that of the brooks, while brooks and ditches generally are thickly frozen and concealed, and the earth is covered with snow, and it is even cold, hard, and nipping winter weather, some fine grass which fills the water begins to lift its tiny spears or blades above the surface, which directly fall flat for half an inch or an inch along the surface, and on these (though many are frost-bitten) you may measure the length to which the spring has advanced (has sprung); very few indeed, even of botanists, are aware of this growth. Some of it appears to go on even under ice and snow. Or, in such a place as

I have described, if it is sheltered by alders or the like, you may see (as March 2d) a little green crescent of caltha leaves raised an inch or so above the water, the leaves but partially unrolled and looking as if they would withdraw beneath the surface again at night. This I think must be the most conspicuous and forward greenness of the spring. The small reddish, radical leaves of the dock, too, are observed flat on the moist ground as soon as the snow has melted there, as if they had grown beneath it.

Talk about reading! a good reader! It depends on how he is heard. There may be elocution and pronunciation (recitation say) to satiety, but there can be no good reading unless there is good hearing also. It takes two, at least, for this game, as for love, and they must coöperate. The lecturer will read but those parts of his lecture which are best heard. Sometimes, it is true, the faith and spirits of the reader run a little ahead and draw after the good hearing, and at other times the good hearing runs ahead and draws on the good reading. The reader and the hearer are a team not to be harnessed tandem, the poor wheel horse supporting the burden of the shafts, while the leader runs pretty much at will, the lecture lying passive in the painted curricie behind. I saw some

men unloading molasses hogsheads from a truck at a depot the other day, by rolling them up an inclined plane. The truckman stood behind and shoved, after putting a couple of ropes, one round each end of the hogshead, while two men standing in the depot steadily pulled at the ropes. The first man was the lecturer, the others were the audience. It is the duty of the lecturer to team his hogshead of sweets to the depot or Lyceum, place the horse, arrange the ropes, and shove, and it is the duty of the audience to take hold of the ropes and pull with all their might. The lecturer who tries to read his essay without being abetted by a good hearing is in the predicament of a teamster who is engaged in the Sisyphean labor of rolling a molasses hogshead up an inclined plane alone, while the freight-master and his men stand indifferent with their hands in their pockets. I have seen many such a hogshead which had rolled off the horse and gone to smash with all the sweets wasted on the ground between the truckmen and the freight-house, and the freight-masters thought the loss was not theirs. Read well! Did you ever know a full well that did not yield of its refreshing waters to those who put their hands to the windlass or the well-sweep? Did you ever suck cider through a straw? Did you ever know the cider to push

out of the straw when you were not sucking, unless it chanced to be in a complete ferment? An audience will draw out of a lecture, or enable a lecturer to read, only such parts of his lecture as they like. It is like a barrel half full of some palatable liquor. You may tap it at various levels, in the sweet liquor, or in the froth, or in the fixed air above. If it is pronounced good, it is partly to the credit of the hearers; if bad, it is partly their fault. Sometimes a lazy audience refuses to coöperate and pull at the ropes because the hogshead is full and therefore heavy, when if it were empty, or had only a little sugar adhering to it, they would whisk it up the slope in a jiffy. The lecturer therefore desires of his audience a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull all together. I have seen a sturdy (truckman) lecturer who had nearly broken his back with shoving his lecture up such an inclined plane, while the audience were laughing at him, at length, as with a last effort, set it a-rolling in amid the audience and upon their toes, scattering them like sheep and making them cry out with pain, while he drove proudly away. Rarely it is a very heavy freight of such hogsheads stored in a vessel's hold that is to be lifted out and deposited on the public wharf, and this is accomplished only after many a hearty pull and a good deal of heave-yo-ing.

March 3, 1860. 2 P. M. 50° +. Overcast and somewhat rain-threatening. Wind southwest. To Abner Buttrick and Tarbell Hills. See a flock of large ducks in a line (may be black?) over Great Meadows, also a few shel-drakes. It was pleasant to hear the tinkling of very coarse brash, broken, honey-combed, dark ice, rattling one piece against another along the northeast shores, to which it had drifted. Scarcely any ice now about river except what rests on the bottom of the meadow, dirty with sediment. The first song-sparrows are very inconspicuous and shy on the brown earth. You hear some weeds rustle, or think you see a mouse run amid the stubble, and then the sparrow flies low away.

March 4, 1840. I learned to-day that my ornithology had done me no service. The birds I heard, which fortunately did not come within the scope of my science, sang as freshly as if it had been the first morning of creation, and had for background to their song an untrodden wilderness stretching through many a Carolina and Mexico of the soul.

March 4, 1841. Ben Jonson says in his epigrams, "He makes himself a thoroughfare of vice." This is true, for by vice the substance of a man is not changed, but all his pores and cavities and avenues are profaned by being

made the thoroughfares of vice. The searching devil courses through and through him. His flesh and blood and bones are cheapened. He is all trivial, a place where three highways of sin meet. So is another the thoroughfare of virtue, and virtue circulates through all his aisles like a wind, and he is hallowed.

We reprove each other unconsciously by our own behavior. Our very carriage and demeanor in the streets should be a reprimand that will go to the conscience of every beholder. An infusion of love from a great soul gives a color to our faults which will discover them as lunar caustic detects impurities in water. The best will not seem to go contrary to others; but as if they could afford to travel the same way, they go a parallel but higher course. Jonson says, —

“That to the vulgar canst thyself apply,
Treading a better path, not contrary.”

March 4, 1852. It is discouraging to talk with men who will recognize no principles. How little use is made of reason in this world! You argue with a man for an hour, he agrees with you step by step, you are approaching a triumphant conclusion, you think that you have converted him, but, ah, no, he has a habit, he takes a pinch of snuff, he remembers that he entertained a different opinion at the commence-

ment of the controversy, and his reverence for the past compels him to reiterate it now. You began at the butt of the pole to curve it, you gradually bent it round according to rule, and planted the other end in the ground, and already in imagination saw the vine curling round this segment of an arbor, under which a new generation was to recreate itself, but when you had done, it sprang back to its former stubborn and unhandsome position like a bit of whalebone.

10 A. M. Up river on ice to Fairhaven Pond. . . . We have this morning the clear, cold, continent sky of January. The river is frozen solidly, and I do not have to look out for openings. Now I can take that walk along the river highway and the meadow which leads me under the boughs of the maples and the swamp white oaks, etc., which in summer overhang the water. I can now stand at my ease and study their phenomena amid the sweet gale and button bushes projecting above the snow and ice. I see the shore from the water side; a liberal walk, so level, wide, and smooth, without underbrush. In some places where the ice is exposed I see a kind of crystallized chaffy snow like little bundles of asbestos on its surface. I seek some sunny nook on the south side of a wood which keeps off the cold wind, among the maples and the swamp white oaks, and there

sit and anticipate the spring and hear the chickadees and the belching of the ice. The sun has got a new power in his rays after all, cold as the weather is. He could not have warmed me so much a month ago, nor should I have heard such rumblings of the ice in December. I see where a maple has been wounded, the sap is flowing out. Now, then, is the time to make sugar.

If I were to paint the short days of winter I should represent two towering icebergs approaching each other like promontories, for morning and evening, with cavernous recesses, and a solitary traveler wrapping his cloak about him and bent forward against a driving storm, just entering the narrow pass. I would paint the light of a taper at midday, seen through a cottage window, half buried in snow and frost. . . . In the foreground should appear the harvest, and far in the background, through the pass, should be seen the sowers in the fields and other evidences of spring. On the right and left of the approaching icebergs the heavens should be shaded off from the light of midday to midnight with its stars, the sun being low in the sky.

I look between my legs up the river across Fair Haven. Subverting the head, we refer things to the heavens; the sky becomes the

ground of the picture, and where the river breaks through low hills which slope to meet each other one quarter of a mile off, appears a mountain pass, so much nearer is it to heaven. We are compelled to call it something which relates it to the heavens rather than the earth.

Now at eleven and a half, perhaps, the sky begins to be slightly overcast. The northwest is the god of the winter, as the southwest of the summer. The forms of clouds are interesting, often, as now, like flames, or more like the surf curling before it breaks, reminding me of the prows of ancient vessels which have their pattern or prototype again in the surf, as if the wind made a surf of the mist. Thus as the fishes look up at the waves, we look up at the clouds. It is pleasant to see the reddish green leaves of the lambkill still hanging with fruit above the snow, for I am now crossing the shrub oak plain to the Cliffs. I find a place on the south side of this rocky hill where the snow is melted and the bare gray rock appears covered with mosses and lichens and beds of oak leaves in the hollows, where I can sit, and an invisible flame and smoke seem to ascend from the leaves, and the sun shines with a genial warmth, and you can imagine the hum of bees amid flowers. The heat reflected from the dry leaves reminds you of the sweet fern and

those summer afternoons which are longer than a winter day, though you sit on a mere oasis in the snow. The snow is melting on the rocks, the water trickles down in shining streams, the mosses look bright; the first awakening of vegetation is at the root of the saxifrage. As I go by the farmer's yard the hens cackle more solidly, as if eggs were the burden of the strain.

A horse's fore legs are handier than his hind ones, the latter but fall into the place which the former have found. They have the advantage of being nearer the head, the source of intelligence. He strikes and paws with them. It is true he kicks with the hind legs. But that is a very simple and unscientific action, as if his whole body were a whiplash and his heels the snapper.

The constant reference in our lives, even in the most trivial matters, to the superhuman is wonderful. If a portrait is painted, neither the wife's opinion of the husband, nor the husband's opinion of the wife, nor either's opinion of the artist, not man's opinion of man, is final and satisfactory. Man is not the final judge of the humblest work, though it be piling wood. The queen and the chambermaid, the king and the hired man, the Indian and the slave, alike appeal to God.

Each man's mode of speaking of the sexual relation proves how sacred his own relations of that kind are. We do not respect the mind that can jest on this subject.

March 4, 1854. P. M. To Walden. In the meadow I see some still fresh and perfect pitcher plant leaves, and everywhere the green and reddish radical leaves of the golden senecio, whose fragrance when bruised carries me back or forward to an incredible season. Who would believe that under the snow and ice lie still, or in mid-winter, some green leaves which bruised yield the same odor that they do when their yellow blossoms spot the meadows in June. Nothing so realizes the summer to me now. In the dry pastures under the Cliff Hill, the radical leaves of the Johnswort are now revealed everywhere in pretty radiating wreaths flat on the ground. These leaves are recurved, reddish above, green beneath, and covered with dewy drops. I see nowadays, the ground being laid bare, great cracks in the earth revealed, a third of an inch wide, running with a crinkling line for twenty rods or more through the pastures and under the walls, frost cracks of the past winter. Sometimes they are revealed through ice four or five inches thick over them. I observed to-day where a crack had divided a piece of bark lying over it with the same

irregular and finely meandering lines, sometimes forking.

March 4, 1855. P. M. Though there is a cold and strong wind, it is very warm in the sun, and we can sit in it when sheltered by these rocks with impunity. It is a genial warmth. The rustle of the dry leaves on the earth and in the crannies of the rocks, and gathered in deep windrows just under their edge, midleg deep, reminds me of fires in the woods. They are almost ready to burn.

March 4, 1859. We stood still a few moments on the turnpike below Wright's (the turnpike which has no wheel track beyond Tuttle's and no track at all beyond Wright's), and listened to hear a spring bird. We heard only the jay screaming in the distance and the cawing of a crow. What a perfectly New England sound is this voice of the crow! If you stand perfectly still anywhere in the outskirts of the town and listen, stilling the almost incessant hum of your personal factory, this is perhaps the sound which you will be most sure to hear, rising above all sounds of human industry, and leading your thoughts to some far bay in the woods, where the crow is venting his disgust. This bird sees the white man come and the Indian withdraw, but it withdraws not. Its untamed voice is still heard above the tinkling

of the forge. It sees a race pass away, but it passes not away. It remains to remind us of aboriginal nature.

March 5, 1841. How can our love increase unless our loveliness increases also. We must securely love each other as we love God, with no more danger that our love be unrequited or ill-bestowed. There is that in my friend before which I must first decay and prove untrue. Love is the least moral and the most. Are the best good in their love? or the worst, bad?

March 5, 1852. It is encouraging to know that though every kernel of truth has been carefully swept out of our churches, there yet remains the dust of truth on their walls, so that if you should carry a light into them, they would still, like some powder-mills, blow up at once.

3 P. M. To the Beeches. A misty afternoon, but warm, threatening rain. Standing on Walden, whose eastern shore is laid waste, men walking on the hillside a quarter of a mile off are singularly interesting objects, seen through the mist, which has the effect of a mirage. The persons of the walkers are black on the snowy ground, and the limited horizon makes them the more important in the scene. This kind of weather is very favorable to our landscape. I must not forget the lichen-painted boles of the beeches.

Round to the white bridge, where the red-maple buds are already much expanded, foretelling summer, though our eyes see only winter as yet. As I sit under their boughs looking into the sky, I suddenly see the myriad black dots of the expanded buds against the sky. Their sap is flowing. The elm buds, too, I find are expanded, though on earth are no signs of spring. I find myself inspecting little granules, as it were, on the bark of trees, little shields or apothecia springing from a thallus, and I call it studying lichens. That is merely the prospect which is afforded me. It is short commons and innutritious. Surely I might take wider views. The habit of looking at things microscopically, as the lichens on the trees and rocks, really prevents my seeing aught else in a walk. Would it not be noble to study the shield of the sun on the thallus of the sky, cerulean, which scatters its infinite sporules of light through the universe? To the lichenist is not the shield (or rather the apothecium) of a lichen disproportionately large compared with the universe?

March 5, 1853. F. Browne showed me some lesser redpolls which he shot yesterday. They turn out to be my falsely called chestnut-frontleted bird of the winter. "*Linaria minor*, Ray. Lesser Redpoll Linnet. From Pennsylvania and

New Jersey to Maine, in winter; inland to Kentucky. Breeds in Maine, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, Labrador, and the fur countries." Aud. Synopsis. They have a sharp bill, black legs and claws, and a bright crimson crown or frontlet, in the male reaching to the base of the bill, with, in his case, a delicate rose or carmine on the breast and rump. Though this is described in Nuttall as an occasional visitor in the winter, it has been the prevailing bird here this winter.

Yesterday I got my grape cuttings. The day before went to the Corner spring to look at the tufts of green grass. . . . Was pleased with the sight of the yellow osiers of the golden willow and the red of the cornel, now colors are so rare. Saw the green fine-threaded conferva in a ditch, commonly called frog spittle. Brought it home in my pocket and it expanded again in a tumbler. It appeared quite a fresh growth, with what looked like filmy air-bubbles as big as large shot in its midst.

The Secretary of the Association for the Advancement of Science requested me, as he probably has thousands of others, by a printed circular letter from Washington, the other day, to fill the blanks against certain questions, among which the most important one was what branch of science I was specially interested in,

using the term science in the most comprehensive sense possible. Now, though I could state to a select few that department of human inquiry which engages me, and should rejoice at an opportunity so to do, I felt that it would be to make myself the laughing stock of the scientific community to describe to them that branch of science which specially interests me, inasmuch as they do not believe in a science which deals with the higher law. So I was obliged to speak to their condition and describe to them that poor part of me which alone they can understand. The fact is I am a mystic, a transcendentalist, and a natural philosopher to boot. Now I think of it, I should have told them at once that I was a transcendentalist; that would have been the shortest way of telling them that they would not understand my explanations. How absurd that though I probably stand as near to Nature as any of them, and am by constitution as good an observer as most, yet a true account of my relation to Nature should excite their ridicule only. If it had been the secretary of an association of which Plato or Aristotle was the president, I should not have hesitated to describe my studies at once and particularly.

March 5, 1856. To Carlisle, surveying. I had two friends. The one offered me friend-

ship on such terms that I could not accept it without a sense of degradation. He would not meet me on equal terms, but only be to some extent my patron. He would not come to see me, but was hurt if I did not visit him. He would not readily accept a favor, but would gladly confer one. He treated me with ceremony occasionally, though he could be simple and downright sometimes. From time to time he acted a part, treating me as if I were a distinguished stranger, was on stilts, using made words. Our relation was one long tragedy, yet I did not directly speak of it. I do not believe in complaint, nor in explanations. The whole is but too plain, alas, already. We grieve that we do not love each other. I could not bring myself to speak and so recognize an obstacle to our affection.

I had another friend, who through a slight obtuseness, perchance, did not recognize a fact which the dignity of friendship would by no means allow me to descend so far as to speak of, and yet the inevitable effect of that ignorance was to hold us apart forever.

March 5, 1858. We read the English poets, we study botany and zoölogy and geology, lean and dry as they are, and it is rare that we get a new suggestion. It is ebb tide with the scientific reports, Professor —— in the chair. We

would fain know something more about these animals and stones and trees around us. We are ready to skin the animals alive to come at them. Our scientific names convey a very partial information, they suggest certain thoughts only. It does not occur to me that there are other names for most of these objects, given by a people who stood between me and them, who had better senses than our race. How little I know of that *arbor vitæ* when I have heard only what science can tell me. It is but a word, it is not a *tree of life*. But there are twenty words for the tree and its different parts which the Indian gave, which are not in our botanies, which imply a more practical and vital science. He used it every day. He was well acquainted with its wood, its bark, and its leaves. No science does more than arrange what knowledge we have of any class of objects. But generally speaking, how much more conversant was the Indian with any wild animal or plant than we, and in his language is implied all that intimacy, as much as ours is expressed in our language. How many words in his language about a moose, or birch bark, and the like. The Indian stood nearer to wild nature than we. The wildest and noblest quadrupeds, even the largest fresh water fish, some of the wildest and noblest birds, and the fairest flowers have actually receded as

we advanced, and we have but the most distant knowledge of them. A rumor has come down to us that the skin of a lion was seen and his roar heard here by an early settler. But there was a race here that slept on his skin. It was a new light when my guide gave me Indian names for things for which I had only scientific ones before. In proportion as I understood the language, I saw them from a new point of view.

A dictionary of the Indian language reveals another and wholly new life to us. Look at the word canoe, and see what a story it tells of outdoor life, with the names of all its parts and of the modes of driving it, as our words describe the different parts of a coach; or at the word wigwam, and see how close it brings you to the ground; or at Indian corn, and see which race has been most familiar with it. It reveals to me a life within a life, or rather a life without a life, as it were threading the woods between our towns, and yet we can never tread on its trail. The Indian's earthly life was as far off from us as heaven is.

I saw yesterday a musquash sitting on thin ice on the Assabet, by a hole which it had kept open, gnawing a white root. Now and then it would dive and bring up more. I waited for it to dive again that I might run nearer to it meanwhile, but it sat ten minutes all wet in the

freezing wind while my feet and ears grew numb, so tough it is. At last I got quite near. When I frightened it, it dove with a sudden slap of its tail. I feel pretty sure that this is an involuntary movement, the tail, by the sudden turn of the body, being brought down on the water or ice like a whiplash.

March 5, 1859. Going down town this A. M. I heard a white-bellied nuthatch on an elm within twenty feet, uttering peculiar notes and more like a song than I remember to have heard from it. There was a chickadee close by to which it may have been addressed. It was something like "*To-what what what what what*" rapidly repeated, and not the usual "*quah quah.*" And this instant it occurs to me that this may be that earliest spring note which I hear and have referred to a woodpecker! This is before I have chanced to see a bluebird, blackbird, or robin in Concord this year. It is the spring note of the nuthatch. It paused in its progress about the trunk or branch, and uttered this lively but peculiarly inarticulate song, an awkward attempt to warble almost in the face of the chickadee, as if it were one of its kind. It was thus giving vent to the spring within it. If I am not mistaken, this is what I have heard in former springs or winters long ago, fabulously early in the season,

when we men had but just begun to anticipate the spring, for it would seem that we in our anticipations and sympathies include in succession the moods and expressions of all creatures. When only the snow had begun to melt and no rill of song had broken loose, a note so dry and fettered still, so inarticulate and half thawed out, that you might and would commonly mistake it for the tapping of a woodpecker. As if the young nuthatch in its hole had listened only to the tapping of woodpeckers and learned that music, and now when it would sing and give vent to its spring ecstasy, it can modulate only some notes like that. That is its theme still. That is its ruling idea of song and music. Only a little clangor and liquidity added to the tapping of the woodpecker. It was the handle by which my thoughts took firmly hold on spring. This herald of spring is commonly unseen, it sits so close to the bark.

March 5, 1860. The old naturalists were so sensitive and sympathetic toward nature that they could be surprised by the ordinary events of life. It was an incessant miracle to them, and therefore gorgons and flying dragons were not incredible. The greatest and saddest defect is not credulity, but an habitual forgetfulness that our science is ignorance.

As we sat under Lupine promontory the other

day, watching the ripples that swept over the flooded meadows, and thinking what an eligible site that would be for a cottage, C—— declared that we did not live in the country as long as we lived in that village street and only took walks into the fields, any more than if we lived in Boston or New York. We enjoyed none of the immortal quiet of the country as we might here, for instance, but, perchance, the first sound that we hear in the morning, instead of the note of a bird, is some neighbor's hawking and spitting.

March 6, 1840. There is no delay in answering great questions; for them all things have an answer ready. The Pythian priestess gave her answers instantly, and oftentimes before the questions were fairly propounded. Great topics do not wait for past or future to be determined; but the state of the crops or Brighton market, no bird concerns itself about.

March 6, 1841. An honest misunderstanding is often the ground of future intercourse.

March 6, 1853. P. M. To Lee's Hill. I am pleased to cut the small woods with my knife to see their color. The high blueberry, hazel, and swamp pink are green. I love to see the clear green sprouts of the sassafras, and its large and fragrant buds and bark. The twigs and branches of young trees twenty feet high look as if scorched and blackened.

The water is pretty high on the meadows (though the ground is covered with snow) so that we get a little of the peculiar still lake view at evening when the wind goes down.

Two red squirrels made an ado about or above me near the North River, hastily running from tree to tree, leaping from the extremity of one bough to that of another on the next tree, until they gained and ascended a large white pine. I approached and stood under this, while they made a great fuss about me. One at length came part way down to reconnoitre me. It seemed that one did the barking, a faint, short, chippy bark, like that of a *toy* dog, its tail vibrating each time, while its neck was stretched over a bough as it peered at me. The other, higher up, kept up a sort of gurgling whistle, more like a bird than a beast. When I made a noise, they would stop a moment.

Scared up a partridge which had crawled into a pile of wood. Saw a gray hare, a dirty yellowish gray, not trig and neat, but, as usual, apparently in dishabille. As it frequently does, it ran a little way and stopped just at the entrance to its retreat, then, when I moved again, suddenly disappeared. By a slight obscure hole in the snow it had access to a large and apparently deep woodchucks' hole.

March 6, 1854. The water here and there

on the meadow begins to appear smooth, and I look to see it rippled by a muskrat. The earth has, to some extent, frozen dry, for the drying of the earth goes on in the cold night as well as the warm day. The alders and hedge-rows are still silent, emit no notes.

According to G. B. Emerson, maple sap sometimes begins to flow in the middle of February, but usually in the second week in March, especially in a clear bright day with a westerly wind, after a frosty night. . . . I saw trout glance in the Mill Brook this afternoon, though near its sources in Hubbard's Close it is still covered with dark icy snow, and the river into which it empties has not broken up. Can they have come up from the sea? Like a film or shadow they glance before the eye, and you see where the mud is roiled by them. . . . I see the skunk-cabbage started about the spring at head of Hubbard's Close, amid the green grass, and what looks like the first probing of the skunk. . . . The ponds are hard enough for skating again. Heard and saw the first black-bird flying east over the Deep Cut, with a *tchuck-tchuck*, and finally a split whistle.

March 6, 1855. To Second Division Brook. . . . Observed a mouse's nest in Second Division meadow, where it had been made under the snow, a nice, warm, globular nest, some five

inches in diameter, amid the sphagnum, cranberry vines, etc., made of dried grass and lined with a still finer grass. The hole was on one side, and the bottom was near two inches thick. There were many small paths or galleries in the meadow leading to this from the brook some rod or more distant.

The small gyrinus is circling in the brook. I see where much fur of a rabbit, which probably a fox was carrying, has caught on a moss-rose twig as he leaped a ditch. . . . There is a peculiar redness in the western sky just after sunset. There are many great dark slate-colored clouds floating there, seen against more distant and thin wispy, bright, vermillion, (?) almost blood-red ones, which in many places appear as the lining of the former. . . . I see in many places where, after the late freshet, the musquash made their paths under the ice, leading from the water a rod or two to a bed of grass above the water level.

March 6, 1858. P. M. Up river on ice to Fair Haven Pond. The river is frozen more solidly than during the past winter, and for the first time for a year I could cross it in most places. I did not once cross it the past winter, though by choosing a safe place I might have done so without doubt once or twice. But I have had no river walks before. I see the first

hen-hawk or hawk of any kind, methinks, since the beginning of winter. Its scream, even, is inspiring, as the voice of a spring bird.

That light spongy bark about the base of the nesæa appears to be good tinder. I have only to touch one end to a coal and it all burns out slowly, without blazing, in whatever position held, and even after being dipped in water.

Sunday, March 6, 1859. P. M. To Yellow Birch Swamp. We go through the swamp near Bee Tree or Oak Ridge listening for blackbirds or robins, and in the old orchard for bluebirds. Found between two of the little birches in the path, where they grow densely, in indigo-bird sproutland, a small nest suspended between one and two feet from the ground. This is where I have seen the indigo-bird in summer, and the nest apparently answers to Wilson's account of that bird, being fastened with saliva to the birch on each side. Wilson says, "It is built in a low bush, . . . suspended between two twigs, one passing up each side." It is about the diameter of a hair-bird's nest within, composed chiefly of fine bark shreds looking like grass, and one or two strips of grapevine bark, and very securely fastened to the birch on each side by a whitish silk or cobweb and saliva. It is thin, the lining being probably gone.

March 6, 1860. P. M. Fair and spring-like

i. e., rather still for March, with some raw wind. Pleasant in sun. Going by Messer's I hear the well-known note and see a flock of *Fringilla hiemalis*, flitting in a lively manner about trees, weeds, walls, and ground by the roadside, showing their two white tail feathers. They are more fearless than the song-sparrow. They attract notice by their numbers and incessant twittering in a social manner. The linarias have been the most numerous birds here the past winter. I can scarcely see a heel of a snow-drift from my window. Jonas Melvin says he saw hundreds of "speckled" turtles out on the banks to-day in a voyage to Billerica for musquash. Also saw gulls. Sheldrakes and black ducks are the only ones he has seen this year. A still and mild moonlight night, and people walking about the streets.

March 7, 1838. We should not endeavor coolly to analyze our thoughts, but, keeping the pen even and parallel with the current, make an accurate transcript of them. Impulse is, after all, the best linguist; its logic, if not conformable to Aristotle, cannot fail to be most convincing. The nearer we can approach to a complete but simple transcript of our thought, the more tolerable will be the piece, for we can endure to consider ourselves in a state of passivity or in involuntary action, but rarely can we

endure to consider our efforts, and, least of all, our rare efforts.

March 7, 1852. At 9 o'clock P. M. to the woods by the full moon. . . . Going through the high field beyond the lone grave-yard, I see the track of a boy's sled before me, and his footsteps shining like silver between me and the moon; and now I come to where they have coasted in a hollow in the upland beanfield, and there are countless tracks of sleds. I forget that the sun shone on them in their sport, as if I had reached the region of perpetual twilight, and their sports appear more significant and symbolical now, more earnest. For what a man does abroad by night requires and implies more deliberate energy than what he is encouraged to do in the sunshine. He is more spiritual, less animal and vegetable, in the former case. . . . This stillness is more impressive than any sound. The moon, the stars, the trees, the snow, the sand when bare, a monumental stillness whose void must be supplied by thought. It extracts thought from the beholder like the void under a cupping-glass raises a swelling. How much a silent mankind might suggest! . . . The moon appears to have waned a little, yet with this snow on the ground I can plainly see the words I write. . . . I do not know why such emphasis should be laid on certain events that tran-

spire, why my news should be so trivial; considering what one's dreams and expectations are, why the developments should be so paltry. These facts appear to float in the atmosphere, insignificant as the sporules of fungi, and impinge on my thallus. Some neglected surface of my mind affords a basis for them, and hence a parasitic growth. We should wash ourselves clean of such news. Methinks I should hear with indifference if a trustworthy messenger were to inform me that the sun drowned himself last night.

March 7, 1853. What is the earliest sign of spring? The motion of worms and insects? The flow of sap in trees and the swelling of buds? Do not the insects awake with the flow of the sap? Bluebirds, etc., probably do not come till the insects come out. Or are there earlier signs in the water, the tortoises, frogs, etc.? The little cup and cocciferæ lichens mixed with other cladonias of the reindeer moss kind are full of fresh fruit to-day. The scarlet apothecia of the cocciferæ on the stumps and earth partly covered with snow, with which they contrast, I never saw more fresh and brilliant. But they shrivel up and lose their brightness by the time you get them home. The only birds I see to-day are the lesser redpolls. I have not seen a fox-colored sparrow or a *Fringilla hiemalis*.

March 7, 1854. P. M. To Anurnsnack. . . .
 Heard the first bluebird, something like *pe-a-wor*, and then other slight warblings as if farther off. Was surprised to see the bird within seven or eight rods on the top of an oak on the orchard's edge under the hill. But he appeared silent, while I heard others faintly warbling and twittering far in the orchard. When he flew I heard no more, and then I suspected that he had been ventriloquizing, as if he hardly dared open his mouth yet while there was so much winter left. It is an overcast and moist, but rather warm afternoon. He revisits the apple-trees and appears to find some worms. Probably not till now was his food to be found abundantly. Saw some fuzzy gnats in the air. . . . The river channel is nearly open everywhere. Saw on the alders by the river-side front of Hildreth's a song-sparrow quirking its tail. It flew across the river to the willows, and soon I heard its well-known dry *tchip-tchip*.

March 7, 1858. Walking by the river this P. M., it being half open, and the waves running pretty high, the black waves, yellowish where they break over ice, I inhale a fresh meadowy spring odor from them which is a little exciting. It is like the fragrance of tea to an old tea-drinker.

March 7, 1859. 6½ A. M. To Hill. I

came out to hear a spring bird, the ground generally covered with snow yet, and the channel of the river only partly open. On the hill I hear first the tapping of a small woodpecker. I then see a bird alight on the dead top of the highest white oak on the hilltop, on the topmost point. It is a shrike. While I am watching him eight or ten rods off, I hear robins down below, west of the hill. Then to my surprise the shrike begins to sing. It is at first a wholly ineffectual and inarticulate sound, without any solid tone, a mere hoarse breathing, as if he were clearing his throat, unlike any bird that I know, a shrill hissing. Then he uttered a kind of mew, a very decided mewing, clear and wiry, between that of a catbird and the note of the nuthatch, as if to lure a nuthatch within his reach. Then rose with the sharpest, shrillest vibratory or tremulous whistling, or chirruping on the very highest key. This high gurgling jingle was like some of the notes of a robin singing in summer. But they were very short spurts in all these directions, though there was all this variety. Unless you saw the shrike, it would be hard to tell what bird it was. These various notes covered considerable time, but were sparingly uttered with intervals. It was a decided chinking sound, the clearest strain, suggesting much ice in the stream. I heard

this bird sing once before, but that was also in early spring, or about this time. It is said that they imitate the notes of other birds in order to attract them within their reach. Why then have I never heard them sing in the winter? I have seen seven or eight of them the past winter quite near. The birds which it imitated, if it imitated any this morning, were the catbird and the nuthatch, neither of which, probably, would it catch. The first is not here to catch. Hearing a peep I looked up and saw three or four birds passing which suddenly descended and settled on this oak top. They were robins, but the shrike instantly hid himself behind a bough, and in half a minute flew off to a walnut and alighted, as usual, on its very topmost twig, apparently afraid of its visitors. The robins kept their ground, one alighting on the very point which the shrike vacated. Is not this, then, probably the spring note or pairing song of the shrike? The first note which I heard from the robins far under the hill was *sweet sweet*, suggesting a certain haste and alarm, and then a rich, hollow, somewhat plaintive *peep* or *peep - eep - eep*, as when in distress with young just flown. When you first see them alighted, they have a haggard, an anxious and hurried look. . . .

The mystery of the life of plants is kindred

with that of our own lives, and the physiologist must not presume to explain their growth according to mechanical laws, or as he would explain a machine of his own making. We must not expect to probe with our fingers the sanctuary of any life, whether animal or vegetable. If we do, we shall discover nothing but surface still. The ultimate expression or fruit of any created thing is a fine effluence which only the most ingenuous worshiper perceives at a reverent distance from its surface even. The cause and the effect are equally evanescent and intangible, and the former must be investigated in the same spirit and with the same reverence with which the latter is perceived. Science is often like the grub which, though it may have nestled in the germ of a fruit, has merely blighted or consumed it, never truly tasted it. Only that intellect makes any progress toward conceiving of the essence which at the same time perceives the effluence. The rude and ignorant finger is probing in the rind still, for in this case, too, the angles of incidence and exidence are equal, and the essence is as far on the other side of the surface or matter as reverence detains the worshiper on this, and only reverence can find out this angle instinctively. Shall we presume to alter the angle at which God chooses to be worshiped? Accord-

ingly, I reject Carpenter's explanation of the fact that a potato-vine in a cellar grows toward the light, when he says, "The reason obviously is that in consequence of loss of fluid from the tissue of the stem on the side on which the light falls, it is contracted, whilst that of the other side remains turgid with fluid; the stem makes a bend, therefore, until its growing point becomes opposite to the light, and then increases in that direction."¹

There is no ripeness which is not, so to speak, something ultimate in itself, and not merely a perfected means to a higher end. In order to be ripe it must serve a transcendent use. The ripeness of a leaf, being perfected, leaves the tree at that point and never returns to it. It has nothing to do with any other fruit which the tree may bear, and only genius can pluck it. The fruit of a tree is neither in the seed nor in the full-grown tree, but it is simply the highest use to which it can be put.

March 8, 1840. The wind shifts from northeast and east to northwest and south, and every icicle which has tinkled in the meadow grass so long trickles down its stem and seeks its water level, unerringly, with a million comrades. In the ponds the ice cracks with a busy and inspiring din, and down the larger streams is

¹ Carpenter's *Vegetable Physiology*, p. 174.

whirled, grating hoarsely and crashing its way along, which was so lately a firm field for the woodman's team and the fox, sometimes with the tracks of the skaters still fresh upon it, and the holes cut for pickerel. Town committees inspect the bridges and causeways as if by mere eye-force to intercede with the ice and save the treasury. In the brooks the floating of small cakes of ice with various speed is full of content and promise, and when the water gurgles under a natural bridge you may hear these hasty rafts hold conversation in an undertone. Every rill is a channel for the juices of the meadow. Last year's grasses and flower stalks have been steeped in rain and snow, and now the brooks flow with meadow tea, thoroughwort, mint, flagroot, and pennyroyal, all at one draught. In the ponds the sun makes encroachments around the edges first, as ice melts in a kettle on the fire, darting his rays through this crevice, and preparing the deep water to act simultaneously on the under side.

March 8, 1842. Most lecturers preface their discourses on music with a history of music, but as well introduce an essay on virtue with a history of virtue. As if the possible combinations of sound, the last wind that sighed or melody that waked the wood, had any history other than a perceptive ear might hear in the least

and latest sound of nature. A history of music would be like the history of the future, for so little past is it and capable of record that it is but the hint of a prophecy. It is the history of gravitation. It has no history more than God. It circulates and resounds forever, and only flows like the sea or air. . . . Why, if I should sit down to write its story, the west wind would rise to refute me. Properly speaking there can be no history but natural history, for there is no past in the soul, but in nature. . . . I might as well write the history of my aspirations. Does not the last and highest contain them all? Do the lives of the great composers contain the facts which interested them? What is this music? Why, thinner and more evanescent than ether; subtler than sound, for it is only a disposition of sound. It is to sound what color is to matter. It is the color of a flame, or of the rainbow, or of water. Only one sense has known it. The least profitable, the least tangible fact, which cannot be bought or cultivated but by virtuous methods, and yet our ears ring with it like shells left on the shore.

March 8, 1853. 10 A. M. Rode to Saxonville with F. Browne to look at a small place for sale, *via* Wayland. Return by Sudbury. On wheels in snow. A spring sheen on the

snow. The melting snow running and sparkling down hill in the ruts was quite spring-like. . . . Saw a mink run across the road in Sudbury, a large, black weasel, to appearance, worming its supple way over the snow. Where it ran, its tracks were thus, = = = = the intervals between the fore and hind feet sixteen or eighteen inches, and between the two fore and the two hind feet two inches and a half.

The distant view of the open-flooded Sudbury meadows all dark blue, surrounded by a landscape of white snow, gave an impulse to the dormant sap in my veins. Dark blue and angry waves contrasting with the white but melting winter landscape. Ponds, of course, do not yet afford this water prospect, only the flooded meadows. There is no ice over or near the stream, and the flood has covered or broken up much of the ice on the meadow. The aspect of these waters at sunset, when the air is still, begins to be unspeakably soothing and promising. Waters are at length and begin to reflect, and instead of looking into the sky, I look into the placid reflecting water for the signs and promise of the morrow. These meadows are the most of ocean that I have fairly learned. Now, when the sap of the trees is probably beginning to flow, the sap of the earth, the river, over-

flows and bursts its icy fetters. This is the sap of which I make my sugar after the frosty nights, boiling it down and crystallizing it. I must be on the lookout now for gulls and the ducks. That dark blue meadowy revelation. It is as when the sap of the maple bursts forth early and runs down the trunk to the snow. Saw two or three hawks sailing. . . . Saw some very large willow buds expanded (their silk) to thrice the length of their scales, indistinctly barred or waved with darker lines around them. They look more like, are more of spring than anything else I have seen. Heard the spring note of the chickadee now before any spring bird has arrived.

March 8, 1854. What pretty wreaths the mountain cranberry makes, curving upward at the extremity. The leaves are now a dark red, and wreath and all are of such a shape as might fitly be copied in wood or stone or architectural foliage.

March 8, 1855. As the ice melts in the swamps I see the horn-shaped buds of the skunk-cabbage, green with a bluish bloom, standing uninjured, ready to feel the influence of the sun, more prepared for spring, to look at, than any other plant.

March 8, 1857. When I cut a white pine twig, the crystalline sap at once exudes. How

long has it been thus? Got a glimpse of a hawk, the first of the season. The tree-sparrows sing a little on the still, sheltered, and sunny side of the hill, but not elsewhere. A partridge goes from amid the pitch pines. It lifts each wing so high above its back and flaps so low and withal so rapidly that it presents the appearance of a broad wheel, almost a revolving sphere, as it whirs off, like a cannon ball shot from a gun.

March 8, 1859. P. M. To Hill in rain. . . . There is a fine freezing rain with strong wind from the north, so I keep along under the shelter of hills and woods, along the south side, in my India-rubber coat and boots. Under the southern edge of Woodis Park, in the low ground I see many radical leaves of the *Solidago altissima* and another, I am pretty sure it is the *Solidago stricta*, and occasionally, also, of the *Aster undulatus*, and all are more or less lake beneath. The first, at least, have when bruised a strong scent. Some of them have recently grown decidedly. So at least several kinds of golden-rods and asters have radical leaves lake-colored at this season. The common strawberry leaves, too, are quite fresh, and a handsome lake color beneath in many cases. There are also many little rosettes of the radical leaves of the *Epilobium coloratum*,

half brown and withered, with bright green centres, at least. . . . There is but a narrow strip of bare ground reaching a few rods into the wood along the edge, but the less ground there is bare, the more we make of it. Such a day as this I resort where the partridges, etc., do, to the bare ground and the sheltered sides of woods and hills, and there explore the moist ground for the radical leaves of plants while the storm lowers overhead, and I forget how the time is passing. If the weather is thick and stormy enough, if there is a good chance to be cold and wet and uncomfortable, in other words to feel weather-beaten, you may consume the afternoon to advantage, thus browsing along the edge of some near wood which would scarcely detain you at all in fair weather, and you will get as far away there as at the end of your longest fair-weather walk, and come home as if from an adventure. There is no better fence to put between you and the village than a storm into which the villagers do not venture out. I go looking for green radical leaves. What a dim and shadowy existence have now to our memories the fair flowers whose localities they mark! How hard to find any trace of their stem now, after it has been flattened under the snows of the winter. I go feeling with wet and freezing fingers amid the withered grass and the

snow for their prostrate stems, that I may reconstruct the plant. But greenness so absorbs my attention that sometimes I do not see the former rising from the midst of those radical leaves when it almost puts my eyes out. The radical leaves of the shepherd's purse are particularly bright. . . . Men of science, when they pause to contemplate the power, wisdom, and goodness of God, or as they sometimes call Him "the Almighty Designer," speak of Him as a total stranger whom it is necessary to treat with the highest consideration. They seem suddenly to have lost their wits.

March 8, 1860. To Cliffs and Walden. See a small flock of grackles on the willow row above railroad bridge. How they sit and make a business of chattering, for it cannot be called singing, and there is no improvement from age to age, perhaps. Yet as nature is a becoming, these notes may become melodious at last. At length, on my very near approach, they flit suspiciously away, uttering a few subdued notes as they hurry off. This is the first flock of black-birds I have chanced to see, though C. saw one the 6th.

To say nothing of fungi, lichens, mosses, and other cryptogamous plants, you cannot say that vegetation absolutely ceases at any season in this latitude. For there is grass in some warm

exposures and in springy places always growing more or less, and willow catkins expanding and peeping out a little farther every warm day from the very beginning of winter, and the skunk-cabbage buds being developed and actually flowering sometimes in the winter, and the sap flowing in the maples on some days in mid-winter, and perhaps some cress growing a little (?), certainly some pads, and various naturalized garden weeds steadily growing, if not blooming, and apple buds sometimes expanding. Thus much of vegetable life, or motion, or growth, is to be detected every winter. There is something of spring in all seasons. There is a large class which is evergreen in its radical leaves, which make such a show as soon as the snow goes off that many take them to be a new growth of the spring. In a pool I notice that the crowfoot (buttercup) leaves which are at the bottom of the water stand up and are much more advanced than those two feet off in the air, for there they receive warmth from the sun, while they are sheltered from cold winds. Nowadays we separate the warmth of the sun from the cold of the wind, and observe that the cold does not pervade all places, but being due to strong northwest winds, if we get into some sunny and sheltered nook where they do not penetrate, we quite forget how cold it is else-

where. . . . I meet some Indians just camped on Brister's Hill. As usual, they are chiefly concerned to find where black ash grows for their baskets. This is what they set about to ascertain as soon as they arrive in any strange neighborhood.

March 9, 1852. A warm spring rain in the night. 3 P. M. Down the railroad. Cloudy, but spring-like. When the frost comes out of the ground there is a corresponding thawing of the man. The earth is now half bare. These March winds, which make the woods roar and fill the world with life and bustle, appear to wake up the trees out of their winter sleep and excite the sap to flow. I have no doubt they serve some such use, as well as to hasten the evaporation of the snow and water. The railroad men have now their hands full. I hear and see bluebirds come with the warm wind. The sand is flowing in the deep cut. I am affected by the sight of the moist red sand or subsoil under the edge of the sandy bank under the pitch pines. The railroad is perhaps our pleasantest and wildest road. It only makes deep cuts into and through the hills. On it are no houses nor foot-travelers. The travel on it does not disturb me. The woods are left to hang over it. Though straight, it is wild in its accompaniments, keeping all its raw edges.

Even the laborers on it are not like other laborers. Its houses, if any, are shanties, and its ruins the ruins of shanties, shells where the race that built the railroad dwelt; and the bones they gnawed lie about. I am cheered by the sound of running water now down the wooden troughs each side the cut. This road breaks the surface of the earth. Here is the driest walking in wet weather, and the easiest in snowy. Even the sight of smoke from the shanty excites me to-day. Already these puddles on the railroad, reflecting the pine woods, remind me of summer lakes.

When I hear the telegraph harp I think I must read the Greek poets. This sound is like a brighter color, red, or blue, or green, where all was dull white or black. It prophesies finer senses, a finer life, a golden age. It is the poetry of the railroad. The heroic and poetic thoughts which the Irish laborers had at their toil have now got expression, that which has made the world mad so long. Or is it the gods expressing their delight at this invention? The flowing sand bursts out through the snow and overflows it where no sand was to be seen. . . . Again it rains, and I turn about. The sounds of water falling on rocks and of air falling on trees are very much alike. Though cloudy, the air excites me. Yesterday all was tight as a

stricture on my breast. To-day all is loosened. It is a different element from what it was. The sides of the bushy hill where the snow is melted look through this air as if I were under the influence of some intoxicating liquor. The earth is not quite steady nor palpable to my sense, — a little idealized.

March 9, 1853. Minott thinks, and quotes some old worthy as authority for saying, that the bark of the striped squirrel is one of the first sure signs of decided spring weather.

March 9, 1854. Saw this morning a muskrat sitting "in a round form on the ice," or rather motionless, like the top of a stake or a mass of muck on the edge of the ice. He then dived for a clam, whose shells he left on the ice beside him.

Boiled a handful of rock tripe (*Umbilicaria Muhlenbergii*) (which Tuckerman says "was the favorite rock tripe in Franklin's journey") for more than an hour. It produced a black puff, looking somewhat like boiled tea-leaves, and was insipid, like rice or starch. The dark water in which it was boiled had a bitter taste, and was slightly gelatinous. The puff was not positively disagreeable to the palate.

P. M. To Great Meadows. Saw several flocks of large grayish and whitish or speckled ducks, I suppose the same that P. calls shel-

drakes. They, like ducks, commonly incline to fly in a line about an equal distance apart. I hear the common sort of quacking from them. It is pleasant to see them at a distance alight on the water with a slanting flight, launch themselves, and sail along so stately. The pieces of ice, large and small, drifting along, help to conceal them. In the spaces of still, open water I see the reflection of the hills and woods, which for so long I have not seen, and it gives expression to the face of nature. The face of nature is lit up by these reflections in still water in the spring. Sometimes you see only the top of a distant hill reflected far within the meadow, where a dull, gray field of ice intervenes between the water and the shore.

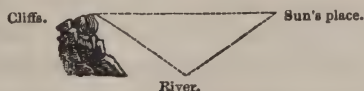
March 9, 1855. P. M. To Andromeda Ponds. Scare up a rabbit on the hillside by these ponds which was gnawing a smooth sumach. See also where they have gnawed the red maple, sweet fern, *Populus grandidentata*, white and other oaks (taking off considerable twigs at four or five cuts), amelanchier, and sallow. But they seem to prefer the smooth sumach to any of them. With this variety of cheap diet they are not likely to starve. The rabbit, indeed, lives, but the sumach may be killed. I get a few drops of the sweet red

maple juice which has run down the main stem where a rabbit has nibbled a twig off close.

The heartwood of the poison dogwood, when I break it down with my hand, has a singular, decayed-yellow look, and a spirituous or apothecary odor.

As the other day I clambered over those great white pine masts which lay in all directions, one upon another, on the hillside south of Fair Haven, where the woods have been laid waste, I was struck, in favorable lights, with the jewel-like brilliancy of the sawed ends thickly bedewed with crystal drops of turpentine, thickly as a shield, as if the Dryads, Oreads, pine-wood nymphs had seasonably wept there the fall of the tree. The perfect sincerity of these terebinthine drops, each one reflecting the world, colorless as light, or like drops of dew heaven-distilled and trembling to their fall, is incredible when you remember how firm their consistency. And is this that *pitch*, which you cannot touch without being defiled?

Looking from the cliffs, the sun being, as



before, invisible, I saw far more light in the reflected sky in the neighborhood of the sun

than I could see in the heavens from my position, and it occurred to me that the reason was that there was reflected to me from the river the view I should have got if I had stood there on the water in a more favorable position. I see that the sand in the road has crystallized as if dried (for it is nearly cold enough to freeze), like the first crystals that shoot and set on water when freezing. . . . C. says he saw yesterday the slate-colored hawk, with a white bar across tail, meadow hawk, *i. e.*, frog hawk. Probably it finds moles and mice.

March 9, 1859. . . . At Corner Spring Brook the water reaches up to the crossing, and *stands* over the ice there, the brook being open and some space each side of it. When I look from forty to fifty rods off at the yellowish water covering the ice about a foot here, it is decidedly purple (though, when I am close by and looking down on it, it is yellowish merely), while the water of the brook and channel, and a rod on each side of it, where there is no ice beneath, is a beautiful very dark blue. These colors are very distinct, the line of separation being the edge of the ice on the bottom; and this apparent juxtaposition of different kinds of water is a very singular and pleasing sight. You see a light purple flood about the color of a red grape, and a broad channel of dark pur-

ple water, as dark as a common blue-purple grape, sharply distinct across its middle.

March 10, 1852. I was reminded this morning, before I rose, of those undescribed ambrosial mornings of summer which I can remember, when a thousand birds were heard gently twittering and ushering in the light, like the argument to a new canto of an epic, a heroic poem. The serenity, the infinite promise of such a morning! The song or twitter of birds drips from the leaves like dew. Then there was something divine and immortal in our life, when I have waked up on my couch in the woods and seen the day dawning and heard the twittering of the birds.

I see flocks of a dozen bluebirds together. The warble of this bird is innocent and celestial like its color. Saw a sparrow, perhaps a song-sparrow, flitting amid the young oaks where the ground was covered with snow. I think that this is an indication that the ground is quite bare a little further south. Probably the spring birds never fly far over a snow-clad country.

I see the reticulated leaves of the rattlesnake plantain in the woods quite fresh and green. What is the little chickweed-like plant already springing up on the top of the cliffs? There are some other plants with bright green leaves

which have either started somewhat or have never suffered from the cold under the snow.

I am pretty sure that I heard the chuckle of a ground squirrel among the warm and bare rocks of the cliffs. . . . The mosses are now very handsome, like young grass pushing up. Heard the phebe note of the chickadee to-day for the first time; I had at first heard their *day, day, day*, ungratefully. "Ah! you but carry my thoughts back to winter!" But anon I found that they, too, had become spring birds. They had changed their note. Even they feel the influence of spring.

I see cup lichens (*cladonias*) with their cups beset inside and out with little leaflets like shell work.

March 10, 1853. This is the first really spring day. The sun is brightly reflected from all surfaces, and the north side of the street begins to be a little more passable to foot-travelers. You do not think it necessary to button up your coat.

P. M. To Second Division Brook. As I stand looking over the river, looking from the bridge into the flowing, eddying tide, the almost strange chocolate-colored water, the sound of distant crows and cocks is full of spring. As Anacreon says "the works of men shine," so the sounds of men and birds are musical.

Something analogous to the thawing of the ice seems to have taken place in the air. At the end of winter there is a season in which we are daily expecting spring, and finally, a day when it arrives. . . . The radical leaves of innumerable plants (as here a dock in and near the water) are evidently affected by the spring influences. Many plants are to some extent evergreen, like the buttercup now beginning to start. Methinks the first obvious evidence of spring is the pushing out of the swamp-willow catkins, the pushing up of skunk-cabbage spathes, and pads at the bottom of water. This is the order I am inclined to, though perhaps any of these may take precedence of all the rest in any particular case. What is that dark pickle-green alga (?) at the bottom of this ditch, looking *somewhat* like a decaying cress, with fruit like a lichen?

At Nut Meadow Brook Crossing we rest awhile on the rail, gazing into the eddying stream. The ripple marks on the sandy bottom where silver spangles shine in the sun, with black wrecks of caddis casts lodged under each, the shadows of the invisible dimples reflecting prismatic colors on the bottom, the minnows already stemming the current with restless, wiggling tails, ever and anon darting aside, probably to secure some invisible mote in the

water, whose shadows we do not at first detect on the sandy bottom, though, when detected, they are so much more obvious as well as larger and more interesting than the substance, in which each fin is distinctly seen, though scarcely to be detected in the substance, these are all very beautiful and exhilarating sights, a sort of diet drink to heal our winter discontent. Have the minnows played thus all winter? The equisetum at the bottom has freshly grown several inches. Then should I not have given the precedence on the other page to this and some other water plants? I suspect that I should, and the flags appear to be starting. I am surprised to find on the rail a young tortoise $1\frac{1}{16}$ inches long in the shell, which has crawled out to sun or perchance is on its way to the water. I think it must be the *Emys guttata*, for there is a large and distinct yellow spot on each dorsal and lateral plate, and the third dorsal plate is hexagonal and not quadrangular, as that of the *Emys picta* is described as being, though in my specimen I can't make it out to be so. Yet the edges of the plates are prominent as described in the *Emys sculpta*, which, but for the spots, two yellow spots on each side of the hind head, and one fainter on the top of the head, I should take it to be. It is about seven eighths of an inch wide, very inactive. When was it hatched and where?

What is the theory of these sudden pitches of deep shelving places in the sandy bottom of the brook? It is very interesting to walk along such a brook as this in the midst of the meadow, which you can better do now before the frost is quite out of the sod, and gaze into the deep holes in its irregular bottom and the dark gulfs under the banks. Where it rushes over the edge of a steep slope in the bottom, the shadow of the disturbed surface is like sand hurried forward in the water. The bottom being of shifting sand is exceedingly irregular and interesting.

What was that sound that came on the softened air? It was the warble of the first blue-bird from that scraggy apple orchard yonder. When this is heard then has spring arrived.

It must be that the willow twigs, both the yellow and green, are brighter colored than before; I cannot be deceived. They shine as if the sap were already flowing under the bark, a certain lively and glossy hue they have. The early poplars are pushing forward their catkins, though they make not so much display as the willows. Still, in some parts of the woods it is good sledding. At Second Division Brook, the fragrance of the senecio, decidedly evergreen, which I have bruised, is very permanent. It is a memorable, sweet, meadow fragrance. I find

a yellow-spotted tortoise, *Emys guttata*, in the bank. A very few leaves of cowslips, and those wholly under water, show themselves yet. The leaves of the water saxifrage, for the most part frost-bitten, are common enough. . . .

Minott says that old Sam Nutting, the hunter, Fox Nutting, old Fox he was called, who died more than forty years ago (he lived in Jacob Baker's home in Lincoln, came from Weston, and was some seventy years old when he died), told him that he had killed not only bears about Fair Haven among the walnuts, but *moose*.

March 10, 1854. Misty rain, rain. The third day of more or less rain.

P. M. C. Miles road *via* Clam-shell Hill. . . . It occurs to me that heavy rains and sudden meltings of the snow, such as we had a fortnight ago (February 26th), before the ground is thawed, so that all the water, instead of being soaked up by the ground, flows rapidly into the streams and ponds, are necessary to swell and break them up. If we waited for the direct influence of the sun on the ice, and the influence of such water as would reach the river under other circumstances, the spring would be very much delayed. In the violent freshet there is a mechanic force added to the chemic. . . .

Saw a skunk in the corner road, which I followed sixty rods or more. Out now, about 4

P. M., partly because it is a dark, foul day. It is a slender, black (and white) animal, with its back remarkably arched, standing high behind, and carrying its head low; it runs, even when undisturbed, with a singular teter or undulation, like the walking of a Chinese lady. Very slow; I hardly have to run to keep up with it. It has a long tail which it regularly erects when I come too near, and prepares to discharge its liquid. It is white at the end of the tail, on the hind head, and in a line on the front of the face. The rest black, except the flesh-colored nose (and, I think, feet). . . . It tried repeatedly to get into the wall, and did not show much cunning. Finally, it steered for an old skunk or woodchuck hole under a wall four rods off and got into it, or under the wall, at least, for the hole was stopped up. There I could view it closely and at leisure. It has a remarkably long, narrow, pointed head and snout which enable it to make those deep narrow holes in the earth by which it probes for insects. Its eyes are bluish-black, and have an innocent, child-like expression. It made a singular loud patting sound repeatedly on the frozen ground under the wall, undoubtedly with its fore feet. (I saw only the upper part of the animal.) . . . Probably it has to do with getting its food, patting the earth to get the insects or worms,

though why it did so then, I know not. Its track was small and round, showing the nails, a little less than an inch in diameter. Its steps alternate, five or six inches by two or two and a half, sometimes two feet together. There is something pathetic in such a sight, next to seeing one of the human aborigines of the country. I respect the skunk as a human being in a very humble sphere. I have no doubt they have begun to probe already where the ground permits, or as far as it does. But what have they eat all winter?

The weather is almost April-like. We always have much of this rainy, drizzling weather in early spring, after which we expect to hear geese.

March 10, 1855. I am not aware of growth in any plant yet, unless it be the further peeping out of the willow catkins. They have crept out further from under the scales, and looking closely I detect a little redness along the twigs even now.

You are always surprised by the sight of the first spring bird or insect. They seem premature, and there is no such evidence of spring as themselves, so that they literally fetch the year about. It is thus when I hear the first robin or bluebird, or looking along the brooks see the first water-bugs out, circling. But you

think they have come and nature cannot recede. Thus, when, on the 6th, I saw the gyrinus at Second Division Brook. I saw no peculiarity in the water or the air to remind me of them, but to-day they are here and yesterday they were not. I go looking deeper for tortoises, when suddenly my eye rests on these black circling apple-seeds in some smoother bay.

The red squirrel should be drawn with a pine cone. . . .

Jacob Farmer gave me to-day a part of the foot, probably of a pine marten, which he found two or three days ago in a trap he had set in his brook under water for a mink, baited with a pickerel. It is colored above with glossy dark brown hair, and contains but two toes, armed with fine and very sharp talons, much curved. There may be a third without the talon. It had left thus much in the trap and departed.

March 10, 1859. There are some who never do nor say anything, whose life merely excites expectation. Their excellence reaches no further than a gesture or mode of carrying themselves. They are a sash dangling from the waist, or a sculptured war-club over the shoulder. They are like fine-edged tools gradually becoming rusty in a shop window. I like as well, if not better, to see a piece of iron or steel, out of

which many such tools will be made, or the bushwhack in a man's hand.

When I meet gentlemen and ladies I am reminded of the extent of the habitable and uninhabitable globe. I exclaim to myself: Surfaces! surfaces! If the outside of a man is so variegated and extensive, what must the inside be? You are high up the Platte River, traversing deserts, plains covered with soda, with no deeper hollow than a prairie-dog hole, tenanted also by owls and venomous snakes.

As I look toward the woods from Wood's Bridge, I perceive the spring in the softened air. This is to me the most interesting and affecting phenomenon of the season as yet. Apparently, in consequence of the very warm sun, this still and clear day, falling on the earth four fifths covered with snow and ice, there is an almost invisible vapor held in suspension, which is like a thin coat or enamel applied to every object, and especially it gives to the woods of pine and oak, intermingled, a softened and more living appearance. They evidently stand in a more genial atmosphere than before. Looking more low I see that shimmering in the air over the earth which betrays the evaporation going on. Looking through this transparent vapor, all surfaces, not osiers and open water alone, look more vivid. The hardness of winter is relaxed.

There is a fine effluence surrounding the wood, as if the sap had begun to stir, and you could detect it a mile off. Such is the difference in an object seen through a warm, moist, and soft air, and a cold, dry, hard one. Such is the genialness of nature that the trees appear to have put out feelers, by which the senses apprehend them more tenderly. I do not know that the woods are ever more beautiful or affect me more.

I feel it to be a greater success as a lecturer to affect uncultivated natures than to affect the most refined, for all cultivation is necessarily superficial, and its root may not even be *directed toward* the centre of the being. . . .

Look up or down the open river channel now so smooth. Like a hibernating animal, it has ventured to come out to the mouth of its burrow. One way, perhaps, it is like melted silver alloyed with copper. It goes nibbling off the edge of the thick ice on each side. Here and there I see a musquash sitting in the sun on the edge of the ice, eating a clam, and the shells it has left are strewn along the edge. Ever and anon he drops into the liquid mirror and soon reappears with another clam.

This clear, placid, silvery water is evidently a phenomenon of spring. Winter could not show us this. . . . As we sit in this wonderful

air, many sounds — that of woodchopping for one — come to our ears, agreeably blunted, or muffled even, like the drumming of a partridge, not sharp and rending as in winter and recently. If a partridge should drum in winter, probably it would not reverberate so softly through the wood, and sound indefinitely far. Our voices even sound differently, and betray the spring. We speak as in a house, in a warm apartment still, with relaxed muscles and softened voices. The voice, like a woodchuck in his burrow, is met and lapped in and encouraged by all genial and sunny influences. There may be heard now, perhaps, under south hillsides and the south sides of houses, a slight murmur of conversation, as of insects, out of doors.

These earliest spring days are peculiarly pleasant; we shall have no more of them for a year. I am apt to forget that we may have raw and blustering days a month hence. The combination of this delicious air, which you do not want to be warmer or softer, with the presence of ice and snow, you sitting on the bare russet portions, the south hillsides of the earth, — this is the charm of these days. It is the summer beginning to show itself, like an old friend, in the midst of winter. You ramble from one drier russet patch to another. These are your stages. You have the air and sun of summer

over snow and ice, and in some places even the rustling of dry leaves under your feet, as in Indian-summer days.

The bluebird on the apple-tree, warbling so innocently, to inquire if any of its mates are within call,—the angel of the spring! Fair and innocent, yet the offspring of the earth. The color of the sky, *above*, and of the subsoil, *beneath*, suggesting what sweet and innocent melody, terrestrial melody, may have its birth-place between the sky and the ground.

March 11, 1842. We can only live healthily the life the gods assign us. I must receive my life as passively as the willow leaf that flutters over the brook. I must not be for myself, but God's work, and that is always good. I will wait the breezes patiently, and grow as they shall determine. My fate cannot but be grand so. We may live the life of a plant or an animal without living an animal life. This constant and universal content of the animal comes of resting quietly in God's palm. I feel as if I could at any time resign my life and the responsibility into God's hands, and become as innocent and free from care as a plant or stone.

My life! my life! why will you linger? Are the years short and the months of no account? . . . Can God afford that I should forget him? Is he so indifferent to my career? Can heaven

be postponed with no more ado? Why were my ears given to hear those everlasting strains which haunt my life, and yet to be profaned by these perpetual dull sounds? . . . Why, God, did you include me in your great scheme? Will you not make me a partner at last? Did it need there should be a conscious material?

My friend! my friend! I'd speak so frank to thee that thou wouldst pray me to keep back some part of it, for fear I robbed myself. To address thee delights me, there is such clearness in the delivery. I am delivered of my tale, which, told to strangers, still would linger in my life as if untold, or doubtful how it ran.

March 11, 1854. Fair weather after three rainy days. Air full of birds, — bluebirds, song-sparrows, chickadees (phebe-notes), and blackbirds. Song-sparrows toward the water with at least two kinds or variations of their strain hard to imitate, — *ozit, ozit, ozit, psa te*
quick
te te tete ter twe ter, is one. The other began *chip, chip che we*, etc., etc.

Bluebirds' warbling curls in elms.

Shall the earth be regarded as a graveyard, a necropolis merely, and not also as a granary filled with the seeds of life, fertile compost, not exhausted sand? Is not its fertility increased by decay?

On Tuesday, the 7th, I heard the first song-sparrow chirp, and saw it flit silently from alder to alder. This pleasant morning, after three days' rain and mist, they generally burst forth into sprayey song from the low trees along the river. The development of their song is gradual, but sure, like the expanding of a flower. This is the first *song* I have heard.

P. M. To Cliffs. River higher than at any time in the winter, I think. . . . Muskrats are driven out of their holes. Heard one's loud plash behind Hubbard's. It comes up brown, striped with wet. I could detect its progress beneath, in shallow water, by the bubbles which came up. . . . From the hill, the river and meadow are about equally water and ice, — rich, blue water, and islands or continents of white ice, no longer ice in place. The distant mountains are all white with snow, while our landscape is nearly bare.

Another year I must observe the alder and willow sap as early as the middle of February at least. . . . Nowadays, where snow-banks have partly melted against the banks by the roadside in low ground, I see in the grass numerous galleries where the mice or moles have worked in the winter.

March 11, 1855. At this season, before grass springs to conceal them, I notice those

pretty little roundish shells on the tops of hills; one to-day on Anursnack.

I see pitch pine needles looking as if white-washed, thickly covered on each of the two slopes of the needle with narrow white oyster-shell-like latebræ or chrysalids of insects.

March 11, 1856. When it is proposed to me to go abroad, rub off some rust, and *better my condition* in a worldly sense, I fear lest my life would lose some of its homeliness. If these fields, and streams, and woods, the phenomena of nature here, and the simple occupations of the inhabitants should cease to interest and inspire me, no culture or wealth would atone for the loss. I fear the dissipation that traveling, going into society, even the best, the enjoyment of intellectual luxuries, imply. If Paris is much in your mind, if it is more and more to you, Concord is less and less, and yet it would be a wretched bargain to accept the proudest Paris in exchange for my native village. At best, Paris could only be a school in which to learn to live here, a stepping-stone to Concord, a school in which to fit for this university. I wish so to live ever as to derive my satisfactions and inspirations from the commonest events, every-day phenomena, so that what my senses hourly perceive in my daily walk, the conversations of my neighbors, may inspire me,

and I may dream of no heaven but that which lies about me. A man may acquire a taste for wine or brandy, and so lose his love for water, but should we not pity him? The sight of a marsh hawk in Concord meadows is worth more to me than the entry of the allies into Paris. In this sense I am not ambitious. I do not wish my native soil to become exhausted and run out through neglect. Only that traveling is good which reveals to me the value of home and enables me to enjoy it better. That man is the richest whose pleasures are the cheapest.

It is strange that men are in such haste to get fame as teachers rather than knowledge as learners.

March 11, 1857. I see and talk with Rice sawing off the ends of clapboards, which he has planed to make them square, for an addition to his house. He has a fire in his shop and plays at house-building there. His life is poetic. He does the work himself. He combines several qualities and talents rarely combined. Though he owns houses in the city whose repairs he attends to, finds tenants for them, and collects the rent, he also has his Sudbury farm and beanfield. Though he lived in a city, he would still be natural, and related to primitive nature around him. Though he owned all Beacon Street, you might find that his mittens were

made of the skin of a woodchuck that had ravaged his beanfield. I noticed a woodchuck's skin tacked up to the inside of his shop. He said it had fattened on his beans and William had killed it, and expected to get another to make a pair of mittens of, one not being quite large enough. It was excellent for mittens; you could hardly wear it out. Spoke of the cuckoo, which was afraid of other birds, was easily beaten, would dive into the middle of a poplar, then come out on to some bare twig and look round for a nest to rob of young or eggs.

March 11, 1859. Mrs. A. takes on dolefully on account of the solitude in which she lives; but she gets little consolation. Mrs. B. says she envies her that retirement. Mrs. A. is aware that she does, and says it is as if a thirsty man should envy another the river in which he is drowning. So goes the world, it is either this extreme or that. Of solitude, one gets too much; another, not enough.

March 11, 1860. I see a woodchuck out on the calm side of Lee's Hill (Nawshawtuck). He has pushed away the withered leaves which filled his hole, and come forth, and left his tracks on those slight patches of the recent snow which are left about his hole.

I was amused with the behavior of two red squirrels, as I approached the hemlocks. They

were as gray as red, and white beneath. I at first heard a faint, sharp chirp, like a bird, within the hemlock, on my account, and then one rushed forward on a descending limb toward me, barking or chirruping at me after his fashion, within a rod. They seemed to vie with one another who should be most bold. For four or five minutes at least they kept up an incessant chirruping or squeaking bark, vibrating their tails and their whole bodies, and frequently changing their position or point of view, making a show of rushing forward, or perhaps darting off a few feet like lightning, and barking still more loudly, *i. e.*, with a yet sharper exclamation, as if frightened by their own motions, their whole bodies quivering, their heads and great eyes on the *qui vive*. You are uncertain whether it is not partly in sport, after all.

March 11, 1861. The seed of the willow is exceedingly minute, as I measure, from one twentieth to one twelfth of an inch in length and one fourth as much in width. It is surrounded at base by a tuft of cotton-like hairs, about one quarter of an inch long, rising around and above it, forming a kind of parachute. These render it more buoyant than the seeds of any other of our trees, and it is borne the furthest horizontally with the least wind. It falls very slowly even in the still air of a chamber,

and rapidly ascends over a stove. It floats more like a mote than the seed of any other of our trees, in a meandering manner, and, being enveloped in this tuft of cotton, the seed is hard to detect. Each of the numerous little pods, more or less ovate and beaked, which form the fertile catkin, is closely packed with down and seeds. At maturity these pods open their beaks, which curve back, and gradually discharge their burden, like the milk-weed. It would take a delicate gin indeed to separate these seeds from their cotton.

If you lay bare any spot in our woods, however sandy, as by a railroad cut, no shrub or tree is surer to plant itself there, sooner or later, than a willow (*Salix humilis*, commonly) or a poplar. We have many kinds, but each is confined to its own habitat. I am not aware that the *Salix nigra* has ever strayed from the river's bank. Though many of the *Salix alba* have been set along our causeways, very few have sprung up and maintained their ground elsewhere.

The principal habitat of most of our species, such as love the water, is the river's bank and the adjacent river meadows, and when certain kinds spring up in an inland meadow where they were not known before, I feel pretty certain that they come from the river meadows. I

have but little doubt that the seed of four of them that grow along the railroad causeway was blown from the river meadows, namely, *Salix pedicellaris*, *lucida*, *Torreyana*, and *petiolaris*.

The barren and fertile flowers are usually on separate plants. The greater part of the white willows set out on our causeways are sterile only. You can easily distinguish the fertile ones at a distance when the pods are bursting. It is said that no sterile weeping willows have been introduced into this country, so that it cannot be raised from the seed. Of two of the indigenous willows common along the bank of our river I have detected but one sex.

The seeds of the willow thus annually fill the air with their lint, being wafted to all parts of the country, and though apparently not more than one in many millions gets to be a shrub, yet so lavish and persevering is Nature that her purpose is completely answered.

March 12, 1842. Consider what a difference there is between living and dying. To die is not to *begin* to die and *continue*, it is not a state of continuance, but of transientness; whereas to live is a condition of continuance, and does not mean to be born merely. There is no continuance of death. It is a transient phenomenon. Nature presents nothing in a state of death.

March 12, 1852. According to Linnæus very many plants become perennial and *arborescent* in warm regions, which with us are annual, for duration often depends more on the locality than on the plant. So is it with men. Under more favorable conditions, the human plant that is short-lived and dwarfed becomes perennial and *arborescent*.

I have learned in a shorter time and more accurately the meaning of the scientific terms used in botany from a few plates of figures at the end of the "*Philosophia Botanica*," with the names annexed, than a volume of explanations or glossaries could teach. And, that the alternate pages may not be left blank, Linnæus has given on them very concise and important instruction to students of botany. This law-giver of science, this systematizer, this methodizer, carries his system into his studies in the field. On one of the little pages he gives some instruction concerning "*herbatio*" or botanizing. Into this he introduces law, order, and system, and describes with the greatest economy of words what some would have required a small volume to tell, all on a small page; tells what dress you shall wear, what instruments you shall carry, what season and hours you shall observe, namely, "from the leafing of the trees, Sirius excepted, to the fall of the leaf, twice a

week in summer, once, in spring; from seven in the morning till seven at night;" when you shall dine and take your rest, etc., whether you shall botanize in a crowd or dispersed, etc., how far you shall go, two miles and a half, at most; what you shall collect, what kind of observations make, etc., etc.

Railroad to Walden, 3 P. M. I see the *Populus* (apparently *tremuloides*, not *grandidentata*) at the end of the railroad causeway, showing the down of its ament. Bigelow makes the *tremuloides* flower in April, the *grandidentata* in May. . . . The little grain of wheat, triticum, is the noblest food of man, the lesser grains of other grasses are the food of passerine birds at present. Their diet is like man's.

The gods can never afford to leave a man in the world who is privy to any of their secrets. They cannot have a spy here. They will at once send him packing. How can you walk on ground where you see through it?

The telegraph harp has spoken to me more distinctly and effectually than any man ever did.

March 12, 1853. It is essential that a man confine himself to pursuits, a scholar, for instance, to studies which lie next to and conduce to his life, which do not go against the grain either of his will or his imagination. The

scholar finds in his experience some studies to be most fertile and radiant with light, others, dry, barren, and dark. If he is wise, he will not persevere in the last, as a plant in a cellar will strive towards the light. He will confine the observations of his mind as closely as possible to the experience or life of his senses. His thought must live with and be inspired with the life of the body. The death-bed scenes even of the best and wisest afford but a sorry picture of our humanity. Some men endeavor to live a constrained life, to subject their whole lives to their will, as he who said he would give a sign, if he were conscious, after his head was cut off, but he gave no sign. Dwell as near as possible to the channel in which your life flows. A man may associate with such companions, he may pursue such employments, as will darken the day for him. Men choose darkness rather than light.

P. M. Saw the first lark rise from the railroad causeway and sail on quivering wing over the meadow to alight on a heap of dirt.

Was that a mink we saw at the boiling spring? The senecio was very forward there in the water, and it still scents my fingers. A very lasting odor it leaves. . . . It is a rare lichen day. The usnea with its large fruit is very rich on the maples in the swamp, luxuriat-

ing in this moist, overcast, melting day, but it is impossible to get it home in good condition.

Looking behind the bark of a dead white pine I find plenty of gnats quite lively and ready to issue forth as soon as the sun comes out. The grubs there are sluggish, buried in the *chankings*. I took off some pieces of bark more than three feet long and one foot wide. Between this and the wood, in the dust left by borers, the gnats were concealed, ready to swarm. This is their hibernaculum.

The rich red-brown leaves of the gnaphalium, downy white beneath, begin to attract me where the snow is off.

March 12, 1854. A. M. Up railroad to woods. We have white frosts these mornings. This is the blackbird morning. Their sprayey notes and conqueree ring with the song-sparrow's jingle all along the river. Thus gradually they acquire confidence to sing. It is a beautiful spring morning. I hear my first robin peep distinctly at a distance on some higher trees, oaks or other, on a high key, no singing yet. I hear from an apple-tree a faint cricket-like chirp, and a sparrow darts away, flying far, *dashing from side to side*. I think it must be the white-in-tail or grass finch. I hear a jay loudly screaming, *phe-phay, phe-*

phay, a loud, shrill chickadee's *phe-bee*. I see and hear the lark sitting with head erect, neck outstretched, in the middle of a pasture, and I hear another far off, singing. They sing when they first come. All these birds do their warbling especially in the still sunny hour after sunrise. Now is the time to be abroad to hear them, as you detect the slightest ripple in smooth water. As with tinkling sounds the sources of streams burst their icy fetters, so the rills of music begin to flow and swell the general choir of spring. Memorable is the warm light of the spring sun on russet fields in the morning.

P. M. To Ball's Hill along river. My companion tempts me to certain licenses of speech, *i. e.*, to reckless and sweeping expressions which I am wont to regret that I have used. I find that I have used more harsh, extravagant, and cynical expressions concerning mankind and individuals than I intended. I find it difficult to make to him a sufficiently moderate statement. I think it is because I have not his sympathy in my sober and constant view. He asks for a paradox, an eccentric statement, and too often I give it to him.

Saw some small ducks, teal or widgeons.

This great expanse of deep blue water, deeper than the sky, why does it not blue my

soul, as of yore? It is hard to soften me now. . . . The time was when this great blue scene would have tinged my spirit more.

Now is the time to look for Indian relics, the sandy fields being just bared.

I stand on the high lichen-covered and colored (greenish) hill beyond Abner Buttrick's, I go further east and look across the meadows to Bedford, and see that peculiar scenery of March in which I have taken so many rambles; the earth just bare and beginning to be dry, the snow lying on the north sides of hills, the gray, deciduous trees, and the green pines souging in the March wind. They look now as if deserted by a companion, the snow. When you walk over bare, lichen-clad hills, just beginning to be dry, and look afar over the blue water on the meadows, you are beginning to break up your winter quarters and plan adventures for the new year. The scenery is like, yet unlike, November. You have the same barren russet, but now instead of a dry, hard, cold wind, a peculiarly soft, moist air, or else a raw wind. Now is the reign of water. I see many crows on the water's edge these days. It is astonishing how soon the ice has gone out of the river. But it still lies on the bottom of the meadow.

Is it peculiar to the song-sparrow to dodge behind and hide in walls and the like?

Toward night the water becomes smooth and beautiful. Men are eager to launch their boats and paddle over the meadows.

March 12, 1856. I never saw such solid mountains of snow in the roads. You travel along for many rods over excellent, dry, solid sleighing where the road is perfectly level, not thinking but you are within a foot of the ground, then suddenly descend four or five feet, and find, to your surprise, that you had been traversing the broad back of a drift.

March 12, 1857. P. M. To Hill. Observe the waxwork twining about the smooth sumach. It winds against the sun. It is at first loose about the stem, but this ere long expands and overgrows it.

Observed the track of a squirrel in the snow under one of the apple-trees on the southeast side of the hill, and looking up saw a red squirrel with a nut or piece of frozen apple (?) in his mouth within six feet, sitting in a constrained position, partly crosswise, on a limb over my head, perfectly still, and looking not at me, but off into the air, evidently expecting to escape my attention by this trick. I stood, and watched and chirruped to him about five minutes, so near, and yet he did not once turn his head to look at me, or move a foot, or wink. The only motion was that of his tail curled over.

his back in the wind. At length he did change his attitude a little and look at me a moment. Evidently this is a trick they often practice. If I had been farther off, he might have scolded at me.

March 12, 1859. P. M. In rain to Ministerial Swamp. . . . As I passed the J—— Hosmer (rough-cast) house, I thought I never saw any bank so handsome as the russet hillside behind it. It is a very barren, exhausted soil where the cladonia lichens abound, and the lower side is a flowing sand, but this russet grass, with its weeds, being saturated with moisture, was, in this light, the richest brown, methought, that I ever saw. There was the pale brown of the grass, red-brown of some weeds (sarothra and pinweed, probably), dark brown of huckleberry and sweet fern stems, and the very visible green of the cladonias, thirty rods off, and the rich brown fringes where the broken sod hung over the sand-bank. . . . On some knolls these vivid and rampant lichens, as it were, dwarf the oaks. A peculiar and unaccountable light seemed to fall on that bank or hillside, though it was thick storm all around. A sort of Newfoundland sun seemed to be shining on it. It was such a light that you looked round for the sun from which it might come. . . . It was a prospect to excite a reindeer.

These tints of brown were as softly and richly fair and sufficing as the most brilliant autumnal tints. In fair and dry weather these spots may be commonplace. But now they are worthy to tempt the painter's brush. The picture should be the side of a barren, lichen-clad hill with a flowing sand-bank beneath, a few blackish huckleberry bushes scattered about, and bright, white patches of snow here and there in the ravines, the hill running east and west, and seen through the storm from a point twenty or thirty rods south.

March 13, 1841. How alone must our life be lived. We dwell on the seashore, and none between us and the sea. Men are my merry companions, my fellow-pilgrims, who beguile the way, but leave me at the first turn in the road, for none are traveling one road so far as myself. Each one marches in the van. The weakest child is exposed to the fates henceforth as barely as its parents. Parents and relatives but entertain the youth. They cannot stand between him and his destiny. This is the one bare side of every man. There is no fence. It is clear before him to the bounds of space.

What is fame to a living man? If he live aright the sound of no man's voice will resound through the aisles of his secluded life. His life

is a hallowed silence, a pool. The loudest sounds have to thank my little ear that they are heard.

March 13, 1842. The sad memory of departed friends is soon incrustated over with sublime and pleasing thoughts, as their monuments are overgrown with moss. Nature doth thus kindly heal every wound. By the mediation of a thousand little mosses and fungi the most unsightly objects become radiant with beauty. There seem to be two sides of this world presented to us at different times, as we see things in growth or dissolution, in life or death. For seen with the eye of a poet, as God sees them, all things are alive and beautiful, but seen with the historical eye, or the eye of memory, they are dead and offensive. If we see Nature as pausing, immediately all mortifies and decays; but seen as progressing she is beautiful.

I am startled that God can make me so rich even with my own cheap stores. It needs but a few wisps of straw in the sun, some small word dropped, or that has long lain silent in some book. When heaven begins and the dead arise no trumpet is blown. Perhaps the south wind will blow.

March 13, 1853. 6 A. M. To Cliffs. There begins to be a greater depth of saffron in the morning sky. The morning and evening horizon fires are warmer to the eye.

March 13, 1855. P. M. To Hubbard's Close. . . . Coming through the stubble of Stow's rye-field in front of the Breed House, I meet with four mice nests in going half a dozen rods. They lie flat on the ground amid the stubble, flattened spheres, the horizontal diameter about five inches, the perpendicular considerably less, composed of grass or finer stubble. On taking them up you do not at once detect the entrance with your eye, but rather feel it with your finger on the side. They are lined with the finest of the grass. These were probably made when the snow was on the ground, for their winter residence while they gleaned the rye-field, and when the snow went off, they scampered to the woods. I think they were made by the *Mus leucopus*, i. e., *Arvida Emmonsii*.

I look at many woodchuck's holes, but as yet they are choked with leaves. There is no sign that their occupants have come abroad.

March 13, 1859. I see a small flock of blackbirds flying over, some rising, others falling, yet all advancing together, one flock, but many birds, some silent, others *tchucking*, — incessant alternation. This harmonious movement, as in a dance, this agreeing to differ, makes the charm of the spectacle to me. One bird looks fractional, naked, like a single thread

or raveling from the web to which it belongs. Alternation! Alternation! Heaven and Hell! Here again, in the flight of a bird, its ricochet motion is that undulation observed in so many materials, as in the mackerel sky.

If men were to be destroyed, and the books they have written to be transmitted to a new race of creatures, a new world, what kind of record would be found in them of so remarkable a phenomenon as the rainbow?

I cannot easily forget the beauty of those terrestrial browns in the rain yesterday. The withered grass was not of that very pale, hoary brown that it is to-day, now that it is dry and lifeless; but being perfectly saturated and dripping with the rain, the whole hillside seemed to reflect a certain yellowish light, so that you looked round for the sun in the midst of the storm. . . . The cladonias crowning the knoll had richly expanded and erected themselves, though seen twenty rods off, and the knoll appeared swelling and bursting as with yeast. The various hues of brown were most beautifully blended, so that the earth appeared covered with the softest and most harmoniously spotted and tinted fur coat. . . . In short, in these early spring rains, the withered herbage thus saturated, and reflecting its brightest withered tint, seems in a certain degree to have re-

vived, and sympathizes with the fresh greenish, or yellowish, or brownish lichens in its midst, which also seemed to have withered. It seemed to me, and I think it may be the truth, that the abundant moisture, bringing out the highest color on the brown surface of the earth, generated a certain degree of light, which, when the rain held up a little, reminded you of the sun shining through a thick mist. . . . The barrenest surfaces are perhaps the most interesting in such weather as yesterday, where the most terrene colors are seen. The wet earth and sand, and especially subsoil, are very invigorating sights.

It is remarkable that the spots where I find most arrowheads, etc., being light, dry soil (as the Great Fields, Clam-shell Hill, etc.), are among the first to be bare of snow and free from frost. It is very curiously and particularly true, for the only parts of the northeast section of the Great Fields which are so dry that I do not slump there are those, small in area, where perfectly bare patches of sand occur, and there, singularly enough, the arrowheads are particularly common. Indeed, in some cases, I find them only on such bare spots, a rod or two in extent, where a single wigwam might have stood, and not half a dozen rods off in any direction. Yet the difference of level

may not be more than a foot, if there is any. It is as if the Indians had selected precisely the driest spots on the whole plain with a view to their advantage at this season. If you were going to pitch a tent to-night on the Great Fields, you would inevitably pitch on one of those spots, or else lie down in water or mud, or on ice. It is as if they had chosen the site of their wigwams at this very season of the year.

March 14, 1842. It is not easy to find one brave enough to play the game of love quite alone with you, but they must get some third person or world to countenance them. They thrust others between. Love is so delicate and fastidious that I see not how it can ever begin. Do you expect me to love with you unless you make my love secondary to nothing else? Your words come tainted if the thought of the world darts between thee and the thought of me. You are not venturous enough for love. It goes alone unscared through wildernesses. As soon as I see people loving what they see merely, and not their own high hopes that they form of others, I pity them, and do not want their love. Did I ask thee to love me who hate myself? No! Love that which I love, and I will love thee that loves it.

The love is faint-hearted and short-lived that

is contented with the past history of its object. It does not prepare the soil to bear new crops lustier than the old.

I would I had leisure for these things, sighs the world. When I have done my quilting and baking, then I will not be backward.

Love never stands still, nor does its object. It is the revolving sun and the swelling bud.

If I know what I love, it is because I *remember* it.

Life is grand, and so are its environments of Past and Future. Would the face of nature be so serene and beautiful if man's destiny were not equally so?

What am I good for now, who am still searching after high things, but to hear and tell the news, to bring wood and water, and count how many eggs the hens lay? In the mean while I expect my life to begin. I will not aspire longer. I will see what it is I would be after. I will be unanimous.

March 14, 1854. Great concert of song-sparrows in willows and alders along Swamp Brook by river. Hardly hear a distinct strain. Couples chasing each other, and some tree-sparrows with them. . . .

P. M. To Great Meadows. Counted over forty robins with my glass in the meadow north of Sleepy Hollow, on the grass and on the snow.

A large company of fox-colored sparrows in Heywood's maple swamp close by. I heard their loud, sweet, canary-like whistle thirty or forty rods off, sounding richer than anything else yet; some on the bushes, singing *twee twee twa twa ter tweer tweer twa*, — this the scheme of it only, there being no dental grit to it. They were shy, flitting before me, and I heard a slight susurrus where many were busily scratching amid the leaves in the swamp, without seeing them, and also saw many indistinctly. Wilson never heard but one sing, their common note, where he heard them, being a *cheep*.

From within the house at 5½ P. M. I hear the loud honking of geese, throw up the window, and see a large flock in disordered harrow flying more directly north, or even northwest, than usual. Raw, thick, misty weather.

March 14, 1855. I observe the tracks of sparrows leading to every little sprig of blue curls amid the other weeds, which, with its seemingly empty pitchers, rises above the snow. There seems, however, to be a little seed left in them. This, then, is reason enough why these withered stems still stand, that they may raise these granaries above the snow for the use of the snowbirds.

March 14, 1858. P. M. I see a *Fringilla*

hiemalis, the first bird, perchance, unless one hawk, which is an evidence of spring, though they lingered with us the past unusual winter till the 19th of January. They are now getting back earlier than our permanent summer residents. It flits past with a rattling or grating *chip*, showing its two white tail feathers.

March 14, 1860. No sooner has the ice of Walden melted than the wind begins to play in dark ripples over the face of the virgin water. It is affecting to see Nature so tender, however old, and wearing none of the wrinkles of age. Ice dissolved is the next moment as perfect water as if it had been melted a million years. To see that which was lately so hard and immovable now so soft and impressible. What if our moods could dissolve thus completely? It is like a flush of life on a cheek that was dead. It seems as if it must rejoice in its own newly acquired fluidity, as it affects the beholder with joy. Often the March winds have no chance to ripple its face at all.

March 15, 1841. When I have access to a man's barrel of sermons, which were written from week to week as his life lapsed, though I now know him to live cheerfully and bravely enough, still I cannot conceive what interval there was for laughter and smiles in the midst of so much sadness. Almost in proportion to

the sincerity and earnestness of the life will be the sadness of the record. When I reflect that twice a week for so many years he pondered and preached such a sermon, I think he must have been a splenetic and melancholy man, and wonder if his food digested well. It seems as if the fruit of virtue was never a careless happiness. A great cheerfulness have all great wits possessed, almost a profane levity to such as understood them not, but their religion had the broader basis in proportion as it was less prominent. The religion I love is very laic. The clergy are as diseased and as much possessed with a devil as the reformers. They make their topic as offensive as the politician; for our religion is as unpublic and incommunicable as our poetical vein, and to be approached with as much love and tenderness.

March 15, 1842. . . . The poor have come out to employ themselves in the sunshine, the old and feeble to scent the air once more. I hear the bluebird, the song-sparrow, and the robin, and the note of the lark leaks up through the meadows, as if its bill had been thawed by the warm sun. As I am going to the woods I think to take some small book in my pocket, whose author has been there already, whose pages will be as good as my thoughts, and will eke them out or show me human life still gleam-

ing in the horizon when the woods have shut out the town. But I can find none. None will sail as far forward into the bay of nature as my thought. They stay at home. I would go home. When I get to the wood their thin leaves rustle in my fingers. They are bare and obvious, and there is no halo or haze about them. Nature lies fair and far behind them all.

Cold Spring. I hear nothing but a phœbe, and the wind, and the rattling of a chaise in the wood. For a few years I stay here, not knowing, taking my own life by degrees, and then I go. I hear a spring bubbling near where I drank out of a can in my earliest youth. The birds, the squirrels, the alders, the pines, they seem serene and in their places. I wonder if my life looks as serene to them too. Does no creature, then, see, not only with the eyes of its own narrow destiny, but with God's? When God made man, he reserved some parts and some rights to himself. The eye has many qualities which belong to God more than man. It is his lightning which flashes therein. When I look into my companion's eye, I think it is God's private mine. It is a noble feature; it cannot be degraded. For God can look on all things undefiled.

Pond. Nature is constantly original and

inventing new patterns, like a mechanic in his shop. When the overhanging pine drops into the water, by the action of the sun and of the wind rubbing it on the shore, its boughs become white and smooth, and assume fantastic forms, as if turned by a lathe. All things, indeed, are subjected to a rotary motion, either gradual and partial, or rapid and complete, from the planet and system to the simplest shell-fish and pebbles on the beach. As if all beauty resulted from an object's turning on its own axis, or from the turning of others about it. It establishes a new centre in the universe. As all curves have reference to their centres or foci, so all beauty of character has reference to the soul, and is a graceful gesture of recognition or waving of the body toward it.

The great and solitary heart will love alone, without the knowledge of its object. It cannot have society in its love. It will expend its love as the cloud drops rain upon the fields over which it floats.

The only way to speak the truth is to speak lovingly. Only the lover's words are heard. The intellect should never speak. It does not utter a natural sound.

How trivial the best actions are. I am led about from sunrise to sunset by an ignoble routine, and yet can find no better road. I

must make a part of the planet. I must obey the law of nature.

March 15, 1852. This afternoon I throw off my outside coat. A mild spring day. I must hie to the Great Meadows. The air is full of bluebirds; the ground almost entirely bare. The villagers are out in the sun, and every man is happy whose work takes him out doors. I go by Sleepy Hollow toward the Great Fields. I lean over a rail to hear what is in the air liquid with the bluebirds' warble. My life partakes of infinity. The air is as deep as our nature. Is the drawing in of this vital air attended with no more glorious results than I witness? The air is a velvet cushion against which I press my ear. I go forth to make new demands on life. I wish to begin this summer well, to do something in it worthy of it and of me, to transcend my daily routine and that of my townsmen, to have my immortality now, in the *quality* of my daily life, to pay the greatest price, the greatest tax, of any man in Concord, and enjoy the most!! I will give all I am for *my* nobility. I will pay all my days for my success. I pray that the life of this spring and summer may ever lie fair in my memory. May I dare as I have never done. May I persevere as I have never done. May I purify myself anew as with fire and water, soul

and body. May my melody not be wanting to the season. May I gird myself to be a hunter of the beautiful, that naught escape me. May I attain to a youth never attained. I am eager to report the glory of the universe. May I be worthy to do it, to have got through with regarding human values so as not to be distracted from regarding divine values. It is reasonable that a man should be something worthier at the end of the year than he was at the beginning.

Yesterday's rain, in which I was glad to be drenched, has advanced the spring, settled the ways, and the old foot-path and the brook and the plank bridge behind the hill, which have been buried so long, are suddenly uncovered, as if we had returned to our earth after an absence, and took pleasure in finding things so nearly in the state in which we left them. We go out without overcoats, saunter along the street, look at the aments of the willow beginning to appear, and the swelling buds of the maple and the elm. The Great Meadows are water instead of ice. I see the ice on the bottom in white sheets.

Most men find farming unprofitable. But there are some who can get their living anywhere. If you set them down on a bare rock, they will thrive there. The true farmer is to those that come after him and take the benefit

of his improvements like the lichen which plants itself on the bare rock and grows and thrives and cracks it and makes vegetable mould to the garden vegetables which are to grow in it.

March 15, 1854. I am sorry to think that you do not get a man's most effective criticism until you provoke him. Severe truth is expressed with some bitterness.

March 15, 1855. Mr. Rice tells me that when he was getting mud out of the little swamp at the foot of Brister's Hill he heard a squeaking and found that he was digging into the nest of what he called a "field mouse," from his description probably the meadow mouse. It was made of grass, etc., and while he stood over it, the mother, not regarding him, came and carried off the young, one by one, in her mouth, being gone some time in each case before she returned, and finally she took the nest itself.

March 15, 1857. P. M. To Hubbard's Close and Walden. I see in the ditches in Hubbard's Close the fine green tips of the spires of grass just rising above the surface of the water in one place, as if unwilling to trust itself to the frosty air. Favored by the warmth of the water and sheltered by the banks of the ditch it has advanced thus far. But generally I see only the flaccid and frost-bitten tips of

grass which apparently started during that warm spell in February. The surface of the ditches is spotted with these pale and withered frost-bitten bladelets. It was the first green blush (nay, it is purple or lake often, and a true blush) of spring, of that Indian spring we had in February. To be present at the instant when the springing grass at the bottoms of ditches lifts its spear above the surface and bathes in the spring air. Many a first faint crop mantling the pools thus early is mown down by the frost before the villager suspects that vegetation has reawakened.

The trout darts away in the hazy brook there so swiftly in zigzag course that commonly I only see the ripple he makes, in proportion, in this brook only a foot wide, like that made by a steamer in a canal. If I catch a glimpse of him before he buries himself in the mud, it is only a dark film without distinct outline. By his zigzag course he bewilders the eye and avoids capture perhaps.

March 15, 1860. 2 P. M. To Lee's Cliff.
. . . A hen-hawk sails away from the wood southward. I get a very fair sight of it sailing overhead. What a perfectly regular and neat outline it presents! an easily recognized figure anywhere. Yet I never see it represented in books. The exact correspondence of the marks

on one side to those on the other, as of the black or dark tip on one wing to that of the other, and the dark line midway the wing. I do not believe that one can get as correct an idea of the form and color of the under sides of a hen-hawk's wings by spreading those of a dried specimen in his study as by looking up at a free and living hawk soaring above him in the fields. The penalty for obtaining a petty knowledge thus dishonestly is that it is less interesting to men generally as it is less significant. Some, seeing and admiring the neat figure of the hawk sailing two or three hundred feet above their heads, wish to get nearer and hold it in their hands, perchance, not realizing that they can see it best at a distance, better now, perhaps, than ever they will again. What is an eagle in captivity! screaming in a court-yard! I am not the wiser respecting eagles for having seen one there. I do not wish to know the length of its entrails.

How neat and all compact the hawk! Its wings and body are all one piece, the wings apparently the greater part, while its body is a mere fullness, a protuberance between its wings, an inconspicuous pouch hung there. It suggests no insatiable maw, no corpulence, but looks like a large moth, with little body in proportion to its wings, its body naturally more

etherealized as it soars higher. These hawks, as usual, began to be common about the first of March, showing that they were returning from their winter quarters.

Am surprised to hear from the pool behind Lee's Cliff the croaking of the wood-frog. It is all alive with them, and I see them spread out on the surface. Their note is somewhat in harmony with the rustling of the now drier leaves. It is more like the note of the classical frog as described by Aristophanes, etc. How suddenly they awake. Yesterday, as it were, asleep and dormant; to-day, as lively as ever they are. The awakening of the leafy woodland pools. They must awake in good condition. As Walden opens eight days earlier than I have known it, so this frog croaks about as much earlier. . . . It is remarkable how little certain knowledge even old weather-wise men have of the comparative earliness of the year. They will speak of the passing spring as earlier or later than they ever knew, when perchance the third spring before, it was equally early or late, as I have known.

March 16, 1840. The cabins of the settlers are the points whence radiate these rays of green and yellow and russet over the landscape. Out of these go the axes and spades with which the landscape is painted. How much is the

Indian summer and the budding of spring related to the cottage. Have not the flight of the crow and the gyrations of the hawk a reference to that roof?

The ducks alight at this season on the windward side of the river in the smooth water, and swim about by twos and threes, pluming themselves and diving to peck at the root of the lily, and the cranberries which the frost has not loosened. It is impossible to approach them within gunshot when they are accompanied by the gull, which rises sooner and makes them restless. They fly to windward first in order to get under weigh, and are more easily reached by the shot if approached on that side. When preparing to fly they swim about with their heads erect, and then, gliding along a few feet with their bodies just touching the surface, rise heavily with much splashing, and fly low at first, if not suddenly aroused, but otherwise rise directly to survey the danger. The cunning sportsman is not in haste to desert his position, but waits to ascertain if, having got themselves into flying trim, they will not return over the ground in their course to a new resting-place.

March 16, 1842. Raleigh's maxims are not true and impartial, but yet are expressed with a certain magnanimity which was natural to the man, as if this selfish policy could easily afford

to give place in him to a more human and generous one. He gives such advice that we have more faith in his conduct than his principles. He seems to have carried the courtier's life to the highest pitch of magnanimity and grace it was capable of. He is liberal and gracious as a prince, that is, within bounds; brave, chivalrous, heroic, as the knight in armor, and not as a defenseless man. His was not the heroism of Luther, but of Bayard. There was more of grace than of truth in it. He had more taste than character. There may be something petty in a refined taste; it easily degenerates into effeminacy. It does not consider the broadest use. It is not content with simple good and bad, and so is fastidious and curious, or nice only. . . . That is very true which Raleigh says about the equal necessity of war and law, that "the necessity of war which among human actions is most lawless hath some kind of affinity and near resemblance with the necessity of law," for both equally rest on force as their basis, and war is only the resource of law, either on a smaller or larger scale, its authority asserted. In war, in some sense, lies the very genius of law. It is law creative and active, it is the first principle of law. What is human warfare but just this, an effort to make the laws of God and nature take sides with one party?

Men make an arbitrary code, and, because it is not right, they try to make it prevail by might. The moral law does not want any champion. Its assertors do not go to war. It was never infringed with impunity. It is inconsistent to deny war and maintain law, for if there were no need of war there would be no need of law.

March 16, 1852. Before sunrise. With what infinite and unwearied expectation and proclamation the cocks usher in every dawn, as if there had never been one before, and the dogs bark still, and the thallus of lichens springs, so tenacious of life is nature.

Spent the day in Cambridge Library. . . . What a wilderness of books it is. Looking over books on Canada written within the last three hundred years, I could see how one had been built on another, each author consulting and referring to his predecessors. You could read most of them without changing your position on the steps. It is necessary to find out exactly what books to read on a given subject. Though there may be a thousand books written upon it, it is only necessary to read three or four. They will contain all that is essential, and a few pages will show which they are. Books which are books are all that you want, and there are but half a dozen in any thousand. I saw that while we are clearing the forest in

our westward progress, we are accumulating a forest of books in our rear, as wild and unexplored as any of nature's primitive wildernesses. The volumes of the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries which lie so near on the shelf are rarely opened, are effectually forgotten, and not implied by our literature and newspapers. When I looked into Purchas's Pilgrims, it affected me like looking into an impassable swamp, ten feet deep with sphagnum, where the monarchs of the forest covered with mosses and stretched along the ground were making haste to become peat. Those old books suggested a certain fertility, an Ohio soil, as if they were making a humus for new literatures to spring in. I heard the bellowing of bullfrogs and the hum of mosquitoes reverberating through the thick embossed covers when I had closed the book. Decayed literature makes the richest of all soils.

March 16, 1854. A. M. Another fine morning. Willows and alders along water courses all alive these mornings, and ringing with the trills and jingles and warbles of birds, even as the waters have lately broken loose and tinkle below,—song-sparrows, blackbirds, not to mention robins, etc., etc. The song-sparrows are very abundant, peopling each bush, willow, or alder for a quarter of a mile, and pursuing each

other as if now selecting their mates. It is their song which especially fills the air, made an incessant and indistinguishable trill and jingle by their numbers. I see ducks afar sailing on the meadow, leaving a long furrow in the water behind them. Watch them at leisure without scaring them, with my glass; observe their free and undisturbed motions. Some dark brown, partly on water, alternately dipping with their tails up, partly on land. Others with bright white breasts, etc., and black heads, of about the same size or larger. (Later date. Probably both sheldrakes.) They dive and are gone some time, and come up a rod off. At first I saw but one, then, a minute after, three. The first phœbe, near the water, is heard.

March 16, 1855. P. M. To Conantum End. At the woodchuck's hole, just beyond the cockspur thorn, I see several diverging and converging tracks of, undoubtedly, a woodchuck or several, which must have come out at least as early as the 13th. The track is about one and three quarters inches wide by two long, the five toes very distinct and much spread, and, including the scrape of the snow before the foot came to its bearing, is somewhat handlike. It is simple and alternate, thus, * * * * * commonly, but sometimes much like a rabbit's, and again, like a mink's, somewhat thus °. °.

They had come out and run about directly from hole to hole, six in all, within a dozen rods or more. This appeared to have been all their traveling, as if they had run round a-visiting and waked each other up the first thing. At first they soiled the snow with their sandy feet. At one place they had been clearing out to-day the throats of two holes within a rod of each other, scattering the mud-like sand, made wet by the melting snow, over the pure snow around. I saw where, between these holes, they had sat on a horizontal limb of a shrub oak (which they had tried their teeth on) about a foot from the ground, plainly to warm and dry themselves in the sun, having muddied it all over. I also saw where one had sunned himself on a stone at the foot of a small pitch pine, and tried his teeth on a dead limb of the pine. They could not go in or out of these sandy burrows without being completely covered with sandy mud. The path over the snow between these holes was quite covered with it. They have but four toes on the fore feet with the rudiment of a thumb. The woodchuck's first journey then appears to be to some neighboring hole which he remembers a dozen or fifteen rods off, and, perchance, he goes as straight or unerringly to it as if he had not been asleep all winter. Apparently, after a

little gossiping there, his first work is to clear out the entrance to his burrow, ejecting the leaves and sand which have there collected. None have traveled beyond these holes, except that one track leads into the swamp. But here are the tracks of foxes bound on longer journeys. They are generally ten or twelve inches apart lengthwise, by three to five wide, . . . but are irregular, now two at the usual distance, then two close together or three or four inches apart only. The foot is very shapely, much like a dog's.

March 16, 1858. . . . A still, foggy, and rather warm day. I heard this morning . . . that peculiar drawling note of a hen who has this peevish way of expressing her content at the sight of bare ground and mild weather. The crowing of cocks and cawing of crows tell the same story. . . .

How conversant the Indian, who lived out of doors, must have been with mouse-ear leaves, pine needles, mosses, and lichens which form the crust of the earth. No doubt he had names accordingly for many things for which we have no popular names.

I walk in muddy fields, hearing the tinkle of the new-born rills. Where the melted snow has made a swift rill in the rut of a cart-path, flowing over an icy bottom, and between icy

banks, I see, just below a little fall an inch high, a circular mass of foam or white bubbles nearly two inches in diameter, slowly revolving, but never moving off. The swift stream at the fall appears to strike one side, as it might the side of a water wheel, and so cause it to revolve; but in the angle between this and the fall half an inch distant, is another circle of bubbles, revolving very rapidly in the opposite direction. The laws, perchance, by which the world was made, and according to which the systems revolve, are seen in full operation in a rill of melted snow.

March 16, 1859. P. M. Launch my boat and sail to Ball's Hill. It is fine, clear weather, and a strong northwest wind. What a change since yesterday! Last night I came home through as incessant heavy rain as I have been out in for many years, through the muddiest and wettest of streets, still partly covered with ice, and the rain-water stood over shoes in many places on the sidewalks. I heard of several who went astray in this water, and had adventures in the dark. You require India-rubber boots then. But to-day I see the children playing at hop-sotch on those very sidewalks, with a bed marked in the dry sand. So rapid are the changes of weather with us and so porous our soil. . . .

A new phase of the spring is presented, a new season has come. We no longer see dripping, saturated russet and brown banks through rain, hearing at intervals the alarm notes of early robins, banks which reflect a yellowish light, but we see the bare and now pale-brown and dry russet hills. The earth has cast off her white coat and come forth in her clean-washed, sober, russet, early spring dress. As we look over the lively tossing blue waves for a mile or more eastward and westward, our eyes fall on these shining russet hills. Ball's Hill appears in the strong light, at the verge of this undulating blue plain, like some glorious newly-created island of the spring, just sprung up from the bottom in the midst of the blue waters. The fawn-colored oak leaves, with a few pines intermixed, thickly covering the hill, look not like a withered vegetation, but an ethereal kind just expanded and peculiarly adapted to the season and the sky.

Look toward the sun, the water is yellow, as water in which the earth had just washed itself clean of its winter impurities; look from the sun and it is a beautiful dark blue; but in each direction the crests of the waves are white, and you cannot sail or row over this watery wilderness without sharing the excitement of this element. Our sail draws so strongly that we cut

through the great waves without feeling them. . . . We meet one great gull beating up the course of the river against the wind at Flint's Bridge. It is a very leisurely sort of limping flight, the bird tacking its way along like a sailing vessel. Yet the slow security with which it advances suggests a leisurely contemplativeness, as if it were working out some problem quite at its leisure. As often as its very narrow, long, and curved wings are lifted up against the light, I see a very narrow, distinct light edging to the wing where it is thin. Its black tipped wings. Afterwards from Ball's Hill I see two more circling about, looking for food over the ice and water.

March 16, 1860. Saw a flock of sheldrakes a hundred rods off on the Great Meadows, mostly males, with a few females, all intent on fishing. They were coasting along a spit of bare ground that showed itself in the middle of the meadow, sometimes the whole twelve apparently in a straight line, at nearly equal distances apart, each with its head under water, rapidly coasting along back and forth, and ever and anon one having caught something would be pursued by the others. It is remarkable that they find their finny prey in the middle of the meadow now, and even on the very inmost side, as I afterward saw, though the water is quite

low. Of course, as soon as they are seen on the meadows there are fishes there to be caught. I never see them fish thus in the channel. Perhaps the fishes lie up there for warmth already.

I also see two gulls nearly a mile off. One stands still and erect for three quarters of an hour, or till disturbed, on a little bit of floated meadow crust which rises above the water, just room for it to stand on, with its great white breast toward the wind. Then another comes flying past it, and alights on a similar perch, but which does not rise quite to the surface, so that it stands in the water. Thus they will stand for an hour, at least. They are not of handsome form, but look like great wooden images of birds, bluish slate, and white. But when they fly they are quite another creature.

March 17, 1842. I have been making pencils all day, and then at evening walked to see an old schoolmate who is going to help make the Welland canal navigable for ships round Niagara. He cannot see any such motives and modes of living as I, professes not to look beyond the securing of certain "creature comforts." And so we go silently different ways with all serenity, I, in the still moonlight through the village this fair evening to write these thoughts in my journal, and he, forsooth, to mature his schemes to ends as good, may be,

but different. So are we two made, while the same stars shine quietly over us. If I or he be wrong, nature yet consents placidly. She bites her lip and smiles to see how her children will agree. So does the Welland canal get built, and other conveniences, while I live. Well and good, I must confess. Fast-sailing ships are hence not detained.

What means this changing sky, that now I freeze and contract and go within myself to warm me, and now I say it is a south wind and go all soft and warm along the way? I sometimes wonder if I do not breathe the south wind.

March 17, 1852. I catch myself philosophizing most abstractly when first returning to consciousness in the night or morning. I make the truest observations and distinctions then, when the will is yet wholly asleep, and the mind works like a machine without friction. I am conscious of having in my sleep transcended the limits of the individual, and made observations and carried on conversations which in my waking hours I can neither recall nor appreciate. As if in sleep our individual fell into the infinite mind, and at the moment of awakening we found ourselves on the confines of the latter. On awakening we resume our enterprises, take up our bodies, and become limited mind again.

We meet and converse with those bodies which we have previously animated. There is a moment in the dawn, when the darkness of the night is dissipated and before the exhalations of the day begin to rise, when we see things more truly than at any other time. The light is more trustworthy, since our senses are purer and the atmosphere is less gross. By afternoon all objects are seen in mirage. . . .

To-day the fox-colored sparrow is on its way to Hudson's Bay.

March 17, 1854. . . . The grass is slightly greened on south bank-sides, on the south side of the house. The first tinge of green appears to be due to moisture more than direct heat. It is not on bare, dry banks, but in hollows where the snow melts last, that it is most conspicuous.

March 17, 1855. See now along the edge of the river, the ice being gone, many fresh heaps of clam-shells which were opened by the musquash when the water was higher, about some tree where the ground rises. And in very many places you see where they formed new burrows into the bank, the sand being pushed out into the stream about the entrance, which is still below water, and you feel the ground undermined as you walk.

March 17, 1857. These days, beginning

with the 14th, more spring-like. I hear the note of the woodpecker from the elms, that early note. Launch my boat. No mortal is alert enough to be present at the first dawn of the spring, but he will presently discover some evidence that vegetation had awaked some days at least before. Early as I have looked this year, perhaps the first unquestionable growth of an indigenous plant detected was the fine tips of grass blades which the frost had killed, floating pale and flaccid, though still attached to their stems, spotting the pools like a slight fall or flurry of dull-colored snow-flakes. After a few mild and sunny days, even in February, the grass in still, muddy pools and ditches, sheltered by the surrounding banks which reflect the heat upon it, ventures to lift the points of its green phalanx into the mild and flattering atmosphere, and advances rapidly from the saffron even to the rosy tints of morning. But the following night comes the frost which with rude and ruthless hand sweeps the surface of the pool, and the advancing morning pales into the dim light of earliest dawn. I thus detect the first approach of spring by finding here and there its scouts and vanguard which have been slain by the rearguard of retreating winter.

March 17, 1858. Hear the first bluebird.

P. M. To the Hill. A remarkably warm and

pleasant day with a south or southwest wind. The air is full of bluebirds, I hear them far and near on all sides of the hill, warbling in the tree-tops, though I do not distinctly see them. I stand by the wall at the east base of the hill, looking into the alder meadow lately cut off. I am peculiarly attracted by its red-brown maze, seen in this bright sun and mild southwest wind. It has expression in it as a familiar freckled face. Methinks it is about waking up, though it still slumbers. I see the still, smooth pools of water in its midst almost free from ice, and seem to hear the sound of the water soaking into it, as it were, its voice. . . .

Even the shade is agreeable to-day. You hear the buzzing of a fly from time to time, and see the black speck zigzag by.

Ah, there is the note of the first flicker, — a prolonged, monotonous *wick-wick-wick-wick-wick-wick*, etc., or, if you please, *quick-quick-quick*, heard far over and through the dry leaves. But how that single sound peoples and enriches all the woods and fields! They are no longer the same woods and fields that they were. This note really quickens what was dead. It seems to put life into the withered grass and leaves and bare twigs, and henceforth the days shall not be as they have been. It is as when

a family, your neighbors, return to an empty house after a long absence, and you hear the cheerful hum of voices and the laughter of children, and see the smoke from the kitchen fire. The doors are thrown open, and children go screaming through the hall. So the flicker dashes through the aisles of the grove, throws up a window here, and cackles out of it, and then there, airing the house. He makes his voice ring upstairs and downstairs, and so, as it were, fits it for his habitation and ours, and takes possession. It is as good as a house-warming to all nature. Now I hear and see him louder and nearer on the top of the long-armed white oak, sitting very upright, as is their wont, as it were calling to some of his kind that may also have arrived.

Sitting under the handsome scarlet oak beyond the hill, I hear a faint note far in the wood which reminds me of the robin; again I hear it; it is he, an occasional *peep*. These notes of the earliest birds seem to invite forth vegetation. . . .

Now I hear, when passing the south side of the hill, or first when threading the maple swamp far west of it, the *tchuck tchuck* of a blackbird, and after, a distinct *conqueree*. So it is a red-wing. Thus these four species of birds all come in one day, no doubt, to almost all parts of the town.

March 17, 1859. 6½ A. M. River rises still higher. . . . A great many musquash have been killed within a week. One says a cart-load have been killed in Assabet. Perhaps a dozen gunners have been out in this town every day. They get a shilling apiece for their skins. One man getting musquash and one mink earned five or six dollars the other day. I hear their guns early and late, long before sunrise and after sunset, for these are the best times.

P. M. To Flint's Bridge by water. The water is very high and as smooth as it ever is. It is very warm. I wear but one coat. On the water, the town and the land it is built on rise but little above the flood. This bright, smooth, and level surface seems here the prevailing element, as if the distant town were an island. I realize how water predominates on the surface of the globe. . . . How different to-day from yesterday. Yesterday was a cool, bright day, the earth just washed bare by the rain, and a strong northwest wind raised respectable billows on our vernal seas and imparted remarkable life and spirit to the scene. To-day it is perfectly still and warm, not a ripple disturbs the surface of these lakes, but every insect, every small black beetle struggling on it, is betrayed. Seen through this air,

though many might not notice the difference, the russet surface of the earth does not shine, is not bright. I see no shining russet islands with dry but flushing oak leaves. The air is comparatively dead when I attend to it, and it is as if there were the veil of a fine mist over all objects, dulling their edges. Yet this would be called a clear day. These aerial differences in the days are not commonly appreciated, though they affect our spirits.

When I am opposite the end of the willow row, seeing the osiers of perhaps two years old, all in a mass, they are seen to be very distinctly yellowish beneath and scarlet above. They are fifty rods off. Here is the same chemistry that colors the leaf or fruit, coloring the bark. It is generally, probably always, the upper part of the twig, the more recent growth, that is the higher colored, and more flower or fruit like. So leaves are more ethereal the higher up and farther from the root. In the bark of the twigs, indeed, is the more permanent flower or fruit. The flower falls in spring or summer, the fruit and leaves fall or wither in autumn, but the blushing twigs retain their color throughout the winter, and appear more brilliant than ever the succeeding spring. They are winter fruit. It adds greatly to the pleasure of late November, of winter, or of

early spring walks to look into these mazes of twigs of different colors.

As I float by the Rock, I hear a rustling amid the oak leaves above that new water line, and there being no wind I know it to be a striped squirrel, and soon see its long unseen striped sides flirting about the instep of an oak. Its lateral stripes, alternate black and yellowish, are a type which I have not seen for a long time, = a punctuation mark to indicate that a new paragraph commences in the revolution of the seasons.

March 17, 1860. P. M. To Walden and Goose Pond. I see a large flock of sheldrakes, which have probably risen from the pond, go over my head in the woods, a dozen large and compact birds flying with great force and rapidity, spying out the land, eying every traveler. Now you hear the whistling of their wings, and in a moment they are lost in the horizon. What health and vigor they suggest! The life of man seems slow and puny in comparison, reptilian.

How handsome a flock of red-wings, ever changing its oval form as it advances, from the rear birds pursuing the others.

March 18, 1842. Whatever book or sentence will bear to be read twice, we may be sure was thought twice. I say this thinking

of Carlyle, who writes pictures or first impressions merely, which consequently will only bear a first reading. As if any transient, any new mood of the best man deserved to detain the world long. I should call his writing essentially dramatic, excellent acting, entertaining especially to those who see rather than those who hear, not to be repeated, more than a joke. If he did not think who made the joke, how shall he think who hears it. He never consults the oracle, but thinks to utter oracles himself. There is nothing in his book for which he is not and does not feel responsible. He does not retire behind the truth he utters, but stands in the foreground. I wish he would just think, and tell me what he thinks, appear to me in the attitude of a man with his ear inclined, who comes as silently and meekly as the morning star, which is unconscious of the dawn it heralds; leading the way up the steep as though alone and unobserved in its observing, without looking behind.

March 18, 1852. That is a pretty good story told of a London citizen just retired to country life on a fortune, who wishing, among other novel rustic experiments, to establish a number of bee communities, would not listen to the advice of his under-steward, but asking fiercely "how he could be so thoughtless as to recom-

mend a purchase of what might so easily be procured on the Downs?" ordered him to hire ten women to go in quest of bees the next morning, and to prepare hives for the reception of the captives. Early the next day the detachment started for the Downs, each furnished with a tin canister to contain the spoil; and after running about for hours, stunning the bees with blows from their straw bonnets, and encountering stings without number, secured about thirty prisoners who were safely lodged in a hive. But, as has been the fate of many arduous campaigns, little advantage accrued from all this fatigue and danger. Next morning the squire sallied forth to visit his new colony. As he approached, a loud humming assured him that they were hard at work, when, to his infinite disappointment, it was found that the bees had made their escape through a small hole in the hive, leaving behind them only an unfortunate humble-bee, whose bulk prevented his squeezing himself through the aperture, and whose loud complaints had been mistaken for the busy hum of industry. You must patiently study the method of nature, and take advice of the under-steward in the establishment of all communities, both insect and human. Probably the bees could not make industry attractive under the circumstances described above.

A wise man will not go out of his way for information. He might as well go out of nature, or commit suicide.

March 18, 1853. . . . The bluebird and song-sparrow sing immediately on their arrival, and hence deserve to enjoy some preëminence. They give expression to the joy which the season inspires, but the robin and blackbird only *peep* and *tchuck* at first, commonly, and the lark is silent and flitting. The bluebird at once fills the air with his sweet warbling, and the song-sparrow from the top of a rail pours forth his most joyous strain. Both express their delight at the weather, which permits them to return to their favorite haunts. They are the more welcome to man for it.

The sun is now declining with a warm and bright light on all things, a light which answers to the late afterglow of the year, when, in the fall, wrapping his cloak about him, the traveler goes home at night to prepare for winter. This is the foreglow of the year, when the walker goes home at eve to dream of summer.

March 18, 1855. Round by Hollowell Place *via* Clam-shell. I see with my glass as I go over the railroad bridge, sweeping the river, a great gull standing far away on the top of a muskrat cabin, which rises just above the water. When I get round within sixty rods of

him, ten minutes later, he still stands on the same spot, constantly turning his head to every side, looking out for foes. Like a wooden image of a bird he stands there, heavy to look at, head, breast, beneath, and rump pure white, slate-colored wings tipped with black, and extending beyond the tail, the herring gull. I can see down to his webbed feet. But now I advance and he rises easily, and goes off north-eastward over the river with a leisurely flight.

At Clam-shell Hill I sweep the river again, and see standing midleg deep on the meadow where the water is very shallow, with deeper around, another of these wooden images, which is harder to scare. I do not fairly distinguish black tips to its wings. It is ten or fifteen minutes before I get him to rise, and then he goes off in the same leisurely manner, stroking the air with his wings, and now making a great circle back in his course, so that you cannot tell which way he is bound. By standing so long motionless in these places they may, perchance, accomplish two objects, *i. e.*, catch passing fish (suckers?) like a heron, and escape the attention of man. His utmost motions were to plume himself once, and turn his head about. If he did not move his head he would look like a decoy.

March 18, 1858. 7 A. M. By river. Al-

most every bush has its song-sparrow this morning, and their tinkling strains are heard on all sides. You see them just hopping under a bush or into some other covert as you go by, turning with a jerk this way and that; or they flit away just above the ground, which they resemble. Theirs is the prettiest strain I have heard yet. Melvin is already out in his boat for all day with his white hound in the prow, bound up the river for musquash, etc., but the river is hardly high enough to drive them out.

P. M. To Fair Haven Hill *via* Hubbard's Bathing Place. How much more habitable a few birds make the fields! At the end of the winter, when the fields are bare, and there is nothing to relieve the monotony of withered vegetation, our life seems reduced to its lowest terms. But let a bluebird come and warble over them, and what a change! The note of the first bluebird in the air answers to the purling rill of melted snow beneath. It is evidently soft and soothing, and, as surely as the thermometer, indicates a higher temperature. It is the accent of the south wind, its vernacular. It is modulated by the south wind.

The song-sparrow is more sprightly, mingling its notes with the rustling of the brush along the water sides, but it is at the same time more terrene than the bluebird. The first wood-

pecker comes screaming into the empty house, and throws open doors and windows wide, calling out each of them to let the neighbors know of its return. But heard farther off it is very suggestive of ineffable associations, which cannot be distinctly recalled, of long-drawn summer hours, and thus it also has the effect of music. I was not aware that the capacity to hear the woodpecker had slumbered within me so long. When the blackbird gets to a *conqueree* he seems to be dreaming of the sprays that are to be and on which he will perch. The robin does not come singing, but utters a somewhat anxious or inquisitive *peep* at first. The song-sparrow is immediately most at home of those I have named.

Each new year is a surprise to us. We find that we had virtually forgotten the note of each bird, and when we hear it again, it is remembered like a dream, reminding us of a previous state of existence. How happens it that the associations it awakens are always pleasing, never saddening, reminiscences of our sanest hours. The voice of nature is always encouraging.

When I get two thirds up the hill, I look round, and am for the hundredth time surprised by the landscape of the river valley and the horizon with its distant blue-scalloped rim. It

is a spring landscape, and as impossible a fortnight ago as the song of birds. It is a deeper and warmer blue than in winter, methinks. The snow is off the mountains, which seem even to have come again like the birds. The undulating river is a bright blue channel between sharp-edged shores of ice retained by the willows. The wind blows strong but warm from west by north (so that I have to hold my paper tight while I write this), making the copses creak and roar, but the sharp tinkle of a song-sparrow is heard through it all. But, ah! the needles of the pine, how they shine, as I look down over the Holden wood and westward! Every third tree is lit with the most subdued, but clear, ethereal light, as if it were the most delicate frost-work in a winter morning, reflecting no heat, but only light. And as they rock and wave in the strong wind, even a mile off, the light courses up and down them as over a field of grain, *i. e.*, they are alternately light and dark, like looms above the forest, when the shuttle is thrown between the light woof and the dark web. At sight of this my spirit is like a lit tree. It runs or flashes over their parallel boughs as when you play with the teeth of a comb. Not only osiers, but pine needles, shine brighter, I think, in the spring, and arrowheads and railroad rails, etc., etc.

Anacreon noticed this spring shining. Is it not from the higher sun and cleansed air and greater animation of nature? There is a warmer red on the leaves of the shrub oak and on the tail of the hawk circling over them.

I sit on the cliff and look toward Sudbury. I see its meeting-houses and its common, and its fields lie but little beyond my ordinary walk. How distant in all important senses may be the town which yet is within sight. With a glass I might, perchance, read the time on its clock. How circumscribed are our walks after all! With the utmost industry we cannot expect to know well an area more than six miles square; and yet we pretend to be travelers, to be acquainted with Siberia and Africa!

March 18, 1860. I examine the skunk cabbage now generally and abundantly in bloom all along under Clam-shell. It is a flower, as it were, without a leaf. All that you see is a stout beaked hood just rising above the dead brown grass in the springy ground where it has felt the heat under some south bank. The single enveloping leaf or spathe is all the flower that you see commonly, and these are as variously colored as tulips, and of singular color, from a very dark, almost black mahogany to a bright yellow, streaked or freckled with mahogany. It is a leaf simply folded around the

flower, with its top like a bird's beak bent over it for its further protection, evidently to keep off wind and frost, and having a sharp angle down its back. These various colors are seen close together, and the beaks are bent in various directions. All along under that bank I heard the hum of honey-bees in the air, attracted by this flower. Especially the hum of one within a spathe sounds deep and loud. They circle about the bud, at first hesitatingly, then alight and enter at the open door and crawl over the spadix, and reappear laden with the yellow pollen. What a remarkable instinct it is that leads them to this flower. This bee is said to have been introduced by the white man, but how much it has learned. This is almost the only indigenous flower in bloom in this town at present, and probably I and my companion are the only men who have detected it this year. Yet this foreign fly has left its home, probably a mile off, and winged its way to this warm bank to find it. Six weeks hence children will set forth a-Maying, and have indifferent luck. But the first sunny and warmer day in March the honey-bee comes forth, stretches its wings, and goes forth in search of the earliest flower.

March 18, 1861. When I pass by a twig of willow, though of the slenderest kind, rising

above the sedge in some dry hollow, early in December or midwinter, above the snow, my spirits rise, as if it were an oasis in the desert. The very name, *sallow* (*salix*, from the Celtic *sal-lis*, near water), suggests that there is some natural sap or blood flowing there. It is a divining rod that has not failed, but stands with its root in the fountain. The fertile willow catkins are those green caterpillar-like ones, commonly an inch or more in length, which develop themselves rapidly after the sterile yellow ones, which we had so admired, are fallen or effete. Arranged around the bare twigs, they often form green wands from eight to eighteen inches long. A single catkin consists of from twenty-five to one hundred pods, more or less ovate and beaked, each of which is closely packed with cotton, in which are numerous seeds, so small that they are scarcely discernible by ordinary eyes.

“The willow worn by forlorn paramour.”

As if it were the emblem of despairing love! It is rather the emblem of triumphant love and sympathy with all nature. It may droop, — it is so lithe and supple, — but it never weeps. The willow of Babylon blooms not the less hopefully with us though its other half is not in the New England world at all, and never has been. It droops not to represent David's tears,

but rather to snatch the crown from Alexander's head. (Nor were poplars ever the weeping sisters of Phaeton, for nothing rejoices them more than the sight of the sun's chariot, and little reck they who drives it.) No wonder its wood was anciently in demand for bucklers, for, like the whole tree, it is not only soft and pliant, but tough and resilient, as Pliny says, not splitting at the first blow, but closing its wounds at once, and refusing to transmit its hurts. I know of one foreign species which introduced itself into Concord as a withe used to tie up a bundle of trees. A gardener stuck it in the ground, and it lived, and has its descendants. Herodotus says that the Scythians divined by the help of willow rods. I do not know any better twigs for this purpose.

You can't read any genuine history, as that of Herodotus or the Venerable Bede, without perceiving that our interest depends not on the subject, but on the man, or the manner in which he treats the subject, and the importance he gives it. A feeble writer, and without genius, must have what he thinks a great theme, which we are already interested in through the accounts of others; but a genius — a Shakespeare, for instance — would make the history of his parish more interesting than another's history of the world. Wherever men have

lived there is a story to be told, and it depends chiefly on the story-teller, the historian, whether that is interesting or not.

March 19, 1841. No true and brave person will be content to live on such a footing with his fellows and himself as the laws of every household now require. The house is the very haunt and lair of our vice. I am impatient to withdraw myself from under its roof as an unclean spot. There is no circulation there. It is full of stagnant and mephitic vapors.

March 19, 1842. When I walk in the fields of Concord and meditate on the destiny of this prosperous slip of the Saxon family, the unexhausted energies of this new country, I forget that this which is now Concord was once Musketaquid, and that the *American race* has had its destiny also. Everywhere in the fields, in the corn and grain land, the earth is strewn with the relics of a race which has vanished as completely as if trodden in with the earth. Is it not good to remember the eternity behind me as well as the eternity before? Wherever I go I tread in the tracks of the Indian. I pick up the bolt which he has but just dropped at my feet. And if I consider destiny I am on his trail. I scatter his hearthstones with my feet, and pick out of the embers of his fire the simple but enduring implements of the wigwam

and the chase. In planting my corn in the same furrow which yielded its increase to his support so long, I displace some memorial of him. I have been walking this afternoon over a pleasant field planted with winter rye in a region where this strange people once had their dwelling-place. Another species of mortal men, but little less wild to me than the musquash they hunted. Strange spirits, demons, whose eye could never meet mine. With another nature, and another fate than mine. The crows flew over the edge of the woods, and, wheeling over my head, seemed to rebuke, as dark-winged spirits more akin to the Indian than I. Perhaps only the present disguise of the Indian. If the new has a meaning, so has the old. . . .

A blithe west wind is blowing over all. In the fine flowing haze, men at a distance seem shadowy and gigantic, as ill-defined and great as men should always be. I do not know if yonder be a man or a ghost.

What a consolation are the stars to man, so high and out of his reach, as is his own destiny. . . . My fate is in some sense linked with theirs; and if they are to persevere to a great end, shall I die who could conjecture it? It surely is some encouragement to know that the stars are my fellow-creatures, for I do not sus-

pect but they are reserved for a high destiny. Man's moral nature is a riddle which only eternity can solve.

I see laws which never fail, of whose failure I never conceived. Indeed, I cannot detect failure anywhere but in my fear. I do not fear that right is not right, that good is not good, but only the annihilation of the present existence. But only that can make me incapable of fear. My fears are as good prophets as my hopes.

March 19, 1852. Observed, as I stood with C—— on the brink of the rill on Conantum, where falling a few inches it produced bubbles, our images three quarters of an inch long, and black as imps, appearing to lean towards each other on account of the convexity of the bubbles. There was nothing but these two distinct black manikins and the branch of the elm over our heads to be seen. The bubbles rapidly burst and succeeded one another.

March 19, 1854. Cold and windy. The meadow ice bears where the water is shallow. . . . Saw in Mill Brook three or four shiners (the first), poised over the sand, with a distinct longitudinal, light-colored line midway along their sides and a darker line below it. This is a noteworthy and characteristic lineament, a cipher, a hieroglyphic, or type of spring. You

look into some clear, sandy-bottomed brook, where it spreads into a deeper bay, yet flowing cold from ice and snow not far off, and see indistinctly poised over the sand, on invisible fins, the outlines of a shiner, scarcely to be distinguished from the sand behind it, as if it were transparent, or as if the material of which it was builded had all been picked up from there, chiefly distinguished by the lines I have mentioned.

March 19, 1856. . . . The snow was constantly sixteen inches deep at least on a level in open land from January 13th to March 13th.

March 19, 1858. P. M. To Hill and Grackle Swamp. Another pleasant and warm day. Painted my boat this P. M. These spring impressions (as of the apparent waking up of the meadow described day before yesterday) are not repeated the same year, at least not with the same force, for the next day the same phenomenon does not surprise us, our appetite has lost its edge. The other day the face of the meadow wore a peculiar appearance, as if it were beginning to wake up under the influence of the southwest wind and the warm sun, but it cannot again this year present precisely that appearance to me. I have taken a step forward to a new position and must see something else. We perceive and are affected by changes too subtle to be described.

I see little swarms of those fine fuzzy gnats in the air. It is their wings which are most conspicuous when they are in the sun. Their bodies are comparatively small and black, and they have two mourning plumes on their fronts. Are not these the winter gnat? They keep up a circulation in the air like water bugs on the water. Sometimes there is a globular swarm two feet or more in diameter, suggesting how genial and habitable the air has become. They people a portion of the otherwise vacant air, being apparently for and of the sunshine, in which they are most conspicuous. . . .

By the river I see distinctly red-wings and hear their *conqueree*. They are not associated with grackles. They are an age before their cousins, have attained to clearness and liquidity; they are officers, epauleted. The others are rank and file. I distinguish one even by its flight, hovering slowly from tree-top to tree-top, as if ready to utter its liquid notes. Their whistle is very clear and sharp, while that of the grackle is ragged and split.

It is a fine evening, as I stand on the bridge. The waters are quite smooth, very little ice to be seen. The red-wing and song-sparrow are singing, and a flock of tree-sparrows is pleasantly warbling. A new era has come. The red-wing's gurglee is heard where smooth waters

begin. One or two boys are out trying their skiffs, even like the fuzzy gnats in the sun, and as often as one turns his boat round on the smooth surface, the setting sun is reflected from its side.

I feel reproach when I have spoken with levity, when I have made a jest, of my own existence. The makers have thus secured seriousness and respect for their work in our very organization. The most serious events have their ludicrous aspects, such as death, but we cannot excuse ourselves when we have taken this view of them only. It is pardonable when we spurn the proprieties, even the sanctities, making them the stepping-stones to something higher.

March 19, 1859. The wind makes such a din about your ears that conversation is difficult, your words are blown away and do not strike the ear they were aimed at. If you walk by the water the tumult of the waves confuses you. If you go by a tree or enter the woods the din is yet greater. Nevertheless this universal commotion is very interesting and exciting. The white pines in the horizon, either single trees or whole woods, a mile off in the southwest or west, are particularly interesting. You not only see the regular bilateral form of the tree, all the branches distinct like the frond

of a fern or a feather (for the pine even at this distance has not merely beauty of outline and color, it is not merely an amorphous and homogeneous or continuous mass of green, but shows a regular succession of flattish leafy boughs or stages in flakes, one above another, like the veins of a leaf, or the leaflets of a frond; it is this richness and symmetry of detail which more than its outline charms us), but that fine silvery light reflected from its needles (perhaps their under sides) incessantly in motion. As a tree bends and waves like a feather in the gale, I see it alternately dark and light, as the sides of the needles which reflect the cool sheen are alternately withdrawn from and restored to the proper angle. The light appears to flash upward from the base of the tree incessantly. In the intervals of the flash it is often as if the tree were withdrawn altogether from sight. I see one large pine wood over whose whole top these cold electric flashes are incessantly passing off harmlessly into the air above. I thought at first of some fine spray dashed upward, but it is rather like broad flashes of pale, cold light. Surely you can never, under other circumstances, see a pine wood so expressive, so speaking. This reflection of light from the waving crests of the earth is like the play and flashing of electricity. No deciduous tree ex-

hibits these fine effects of light. Literally, incessant sheets not of heat, but of cold lightning, you would say, were flashing there. Seeing some just over the roof of a house which was far on this side, I thought at first that it was something like smoke even, though a rare kind of smoke, that went up from the house. In short, you see a play of light over the whole pine, similar in its cause to that seen on a waving field of grain, but far grander in its effects. Seen at mid-day even, it is still the light of dewy morning alone that is reflected from the needles of the pine. This is the brightening and awakening of the pines, a phenomenon, perchance, connected with the flow of sap in them. I feel somewhat like the young Astyanax at sight of his father's flashing crest. As if in this wind storm of March a certain electricity were passing from earth to heaven through the pines and calling them to life.

We are interested in the phenomena of nature mainly as children are, or as we are in games of chance. They are more or less exciting. Our appetite for novelty is insatiable. We do not attend to ordinary things, though they are most important, but to extraordinary ones. While it is only moderately hot or cold, or wet or dry, nobody attends to it, but when nature goes to an extreme in any of these

directions we are all on the alert with excitement. Not that we care about the philosophy or the effects of the phenomenon. *E. g.*, when I went to Boston in the early train the coldest morning of last winter, two topics seemingly occupied the attention of the passengers: Morphy's chess victories, and nature's victorious cold that morning. The inhabitants of various towns were comparing notes, and that one whose door opened upon a greater degree of cold than any of his neighbors' doors chuckled not a little. Nearly every one I met asked me, almost before the salutations were over, "how the glass stood" at my house or in my town, — the Librarian of the college, the Register of Deeds at Cambridgeport, a total stranger to me, . . . and each rubbed his hands with pretended horror but real delight, if I named a higher figure than he had yet heard. It was plain that one object which the cold was given us for was our amusement, a passing excitement. It would be perfectly consistent and American to bet on the cold of our respective towns for the morning that is to come. Thus a greater degree of cold may be said to warm us more than a less one. This is a perfectly legitimate amusement, only we should know that each day is peculiar and has its kindred excitements.

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In those wet days like the 12th and 15th, when the browns culminated, the sun being concealed, I was drawn towards and worshiped the brownish light in the sod, the withered grass, etc., on barren hills. I felt as if I could eat the very crust of the earth; I never felt so terrene, never sympathized so with the surface of the earth. From whatever source the light and heat come, thither we look with love.

March 19, 1860. Going along the turnpike I look over to the pitch pines on Moore's hill-side, and it strikes me that this pine, take the year round, is the most cheerful tree and most living to look at and have about your house, it is so sunny and full of light, in harmony with the yellow sand there and the spring sun. The deciduous trees are apparently dead and the white pine is much darker, but the pitch pine has an ingrained sunniness and is especially valuable for imparting warmth to the landscape at this season. Yet men will take pains to cut down these trees, and set imported larches in their places! The pitch pine shines in the spring somewhat as the osiers do.

March 20, 1840. In society all the inspiration of my lonely hours seems to flow back on me, and then first to have expression.

Love never degrades its votaries, but lifts them up to higher walks of being; they *over-*

look one another. All other charities are swallowed up in this. It is gift and reward both. We will have no vulgar cupid for a go-between, to make us the playthings of each other, but rather cultivate an irreconcilable hatred instead of this.

March 20, 1841. Even the wisest and best are apt to use their lives as the occasion to do something else in than to live greatly. But we should hang as fondly over this work as the finishing and embellishment of a poem.

It is a great relief when for a few moments in the day we can retire to our chamber and be completely true to ourselves. It leavens the rest of our hours. In that moment I will be nakedly as vicious as I am; this false life of mine shall have a being at length.

March 20, 1842. My friend is cold and reserved because his love for me is waxing and not waning. These are the early processes; the particles are just beginning to shoot in crystals. If the mountains came to me I should no longer go to the mountains. So soon as that consummation takes place which I wish, it will be past. Shall I not have a friend in reserve? Heaven is to come. I hope this is not it. Words should pass between friends as the lightning passes from cloud to cloud.

I don't know how much I assist in the econ-

omy of nature when I declare a fact. Is it not an important fact in the history of a plant that I tell my friend where I found it?

We do not wish friends to feed and clothe our bodies (neighbors are kind enough for that), but to do the like offices for our spirits. We wish to spread and publish ourselves as the sun spreads its rays, and we toss the new thought to the friend, and thus it is dispersed. Friends are those twain who feel their interests to be one. Each knows that the other might as well have said what he said. All beauty, all music, all delight springs from apparent dualism, but real unity. My friend is my real brother. I see his nature groping yonder so like my own. Does there go one whom I know, then I go there.

Comparatively speaking I care not for the man or his designs who would make the very highest use of me short of an all-adventuring friendship.

The field where friends have met is consecrated forever.

Man seeks friendship out of the desire to realize a home here.

As the Indian thinks he receives into himself the courage and strength of his conquered enemy, so we add to ourselves all the character and heart of our friend. He is my creation.

I can do what I will with him. There is no possibility of being thwarted. The friend is like wax in the rays that fall from our own hearts. My friend does not take my word for anything, but he takes me. He trusts me as I trust myself. We only need to be as true to others as we are to ourselves that there may be ground enough for friendship. In the beginnings of friendship, for it does not grow, we realize such love and justice as are attributed to God.

Very few are they from whom we derive any information. The most only announce and tell tales, but the friend *in-forms*.

How simple is the natural connection of events. We complain greatly of the want of flow and sequence in books, but if the journalist only move himself from Boston to New York, and speak as before, there is link enough. And so there would be if he were as careless of connection and order when he stayed at home, and let the incessant progress which his life makes be the apology for abruptness. Is not my life riveted together? has not it sequence? Do not my breathings follow each other naturally?

March 20, 1853. I notice the downy, swaddled plants now and in the fall, the fragrant life-everlasting and the ribwort, innocents born

in a cloud. Those algæ I saw the other day in John Hosmer's ditch were more like seaweed than anything else I have seen in the country. They made me look at the whole earth as a seashore, reminded me of Nereids, sea-nymphs, Tritons, Proteus, etc., etc., made the ditcher fabulate in an older than the arrowheaded character. Better learn this strange character which nature uses to-day than the Sanskrit, "books in the brooks." . . .

It is evident that the English do not enjoy that contrast between winter and summer that we do, that there is too much greenness and spring in the winter, there is no such wonderful resurrection of the year. Birds kindred with our first spring ones remain with them all winter, and flowers answering to our earliest spring ones put forth there in January. They have no winter in our sense, only a winter like our spring.

The peculiarity of to-day is that now first you perceive that dry, warm, summer-presaging scent from dry oaks and other leaves on the sides of hills and ledges. You smell the summer from afar. The warmth makes a man young again. There is also some dryness, almost dustiness, in the roads. The mountains are white with snow. When the wind is north-west, it is now wintry, but at present it is more

westerly. The edges of the mountains melt into the sky. It is affecting to be put into communication with such distant objects by the power of vision, actually to look into such lands of promise.

In this spring breeze, how full of life the silvery pines, probably the under sides of their leaves. The canoe-birch sprouts are red or salmon-colored like those of the common, but soon they cast off their salmon-colored jackets, and come forth with a white but naked look, all dangling with ragged reddish curls. What is that little bird that makes so much use of these curls in its nest lined with coarse grass?

In a stubble field started up a bevy (about twenty) of quail which went off to some young pitch pines with a whirl like a shot, the plump round birds. The redpolls are still numerous. (Have not seen them again, March 28th.)

March 20, 1855. It is remarkable by what a gradation of days which we call pleasant and warm, beginning in the last of February, we come at last to real summer warmth. At first a sunny, calm, serene winter day is pronounced spring, or reminds us of it. And even the first pleasant spring day, perhaps, we walk with our great-coat buttoned up, and gloves on.

Trying the other day to imitate the honking of geese, I found myself flapping my sides with

my elbows, and uttering something like *snowack* with a nasal twang and twist of my head, and I produced the note so perfectly in the opinion of the hearers, that I thought I might possibly draw a flock down.

We notice the color of the water especially at this season, when it is recently revealed (and in the fall), because there is little color elsewhere. It shows best in a clear air, contrasting with the russet shores.

March 20, 1858. A. M. By river. The tree-sparrow is perhaps the sweetest and most melodious warbler at present and for some days. It is peculiar, too, for singing in concert along the hedge-rows, much like a canary, especially in the mornings, very clear, sweet, melodious notes, between a twitter and a warble, of which it is hard to catch the strain, for you commonly hear many at once. The note of the *Fringilla hiemalis*, or *chill-lill*, is a jingle, with also a shorter and drier crackling *chip* as it flits by.

At Hubbard's wall how handsome the willow catkins! Those wonderfully bright silvery buttons so regularly disposed in oval schools in the air, or, if you please, along the seams which the twigs make, in all degrees of forwardness, from the faintest, tiniest speck of silver just peeping from beneath the black scales to lusty pussies which have thrown off their scaly coats,

and show some redness at base or on close inspection. These fixed swarms of arctic buds spot the air very prettily along the hedges. They remind me somewhat by their brilliancy of the snow flecks, which are so bright by contrast at this season when the sun is high. They are grayish, not nearly so silvery a week or ten days later, when more expanded, showing the dark scales.

The fishes are going up the brooks as they open; they are dispersing themselves through the fields and woods, imparting new life into them. They are taking their places under the shelving banks and in the dark swamps. The water running down meets the fishes running up. They hear the latest news. Spring-aroused fishes are running up our veins too. Little fishes are seeking the sources of the brooks, seeking to disseminate their principles. Talk about a revival of religion! Business men's prayer-meetings, with which all the country goes mad now! What if it were as true and wholesome a revival as the little fishes feel which come out of the sluggish waters, and run up the brooks toward their sources. All Nature revives at this season. With her it is really a new life. It cheers me to behold the swarms of gnats which have revived in the spring sun. The fish lurks by the mouth of its native brook

watching its opportunity to dart up the stream by the cakes of ice. Do the fishes stay to hold prayer-meetings in Fair Haven Bay, while some monstrous pike gulps them down? Or is not each one privately, or with kindred spirits, as soon as possible, stemming the course of its native brook, making its way to more ethereal waters, burnishing its scaly armor by its speed? . . . No wonder we feel the spring influences. There is a motion in the very ground under our feet. Each rill is peopled with new life rushing up it.

In order that a house and grounds may be picturesque and interesting in the highest degree, they must suggest the idea of necessity, proving the devotion of the builder, not of luxury. We need to see the honest and naked life here and there protruding. What is a fort without any foe before it? that is not now sustaining and never has sustained a siege? The gentleman whose purse is always full, and who can meet all demands, though he employs the most famous artists, can never make a very interesting seat. He does not carve from near enough to the bone. No man is rich enough to keep a poet in his pay.

March 20, 1859. P. M. I see under the east side of the house, amid the evergreens, where they are sheltered from the cold north-

west wind, a company of sparrows, chiefly *Fringilla hiemalis*, two or three tree-sparrows, and one song-sparrow, quietly feeding together. I watch them through a window within six or eight feet. They evidently love to be sheltered from the wind, and at least are not averse to each other's society. One perches on a bush to sing, while others are feeding on the ground; but he is very restless on his perch, hopping about and stooping, as if dodging those that fly over. He must perch on some bit of stubble or some twig to sing. The tree-sparrows sing a little. They are evidently picking up the seeds of weeds which lie on the surface of the ground, invisible to our eyes. They suffer their wings to hang rather loose. The *Fringilla hiemalis* is the largest of the three. It has a remarkably distinct light-colored bill, and when it stretches shows very distinct clear white lateral tail feathers. This stretching seems to be contagious among them, like yawning with us. The tree-sparrows are much brighter brown and white than the song-sparrow. The latter alone scratches once or twice, and is more inclined to hop or creep close to the ground under the fallen weeds. Perhaps it deserves most to be called the *ground*-bird.

March 21, 1840. Our limbs, indeed, have room enough; it is our souls that rust in a cor-

ner. Let us migrate interiorly without intermission, and pitch our tent each day nearer the western horizon. The really fertile soils and luxuriant prairies lie on this side the Alleghanies. There has been no Hanno of the affections. Their domain is untraveled ground to the Mogul's dominions.

March 21, 1841. To be associated with others by my friend's generosity when he bestows a gift is an additional favor to be grateful for.

March 21, 1853. P. M. To Kibbe Place. The *Stellaria media* is fairly in bloom in Mr. C——'s garden. This, then, is our earliest flower, though it is said to have been introduced. It may blossom under favorable circumstances, in warmer weather than usual, any time in the winter. It has been so much opened that you could easily count its petals any month the past winter, and *plainly* blossoms with the first pleasant weather that brings the robins, etc., in numbers. The bees this morning had access to no flower, so they came to the grafting wax on my boat, though it was mixed with tallow and covered with fresh paint. Often they essayed to light on it and retreated in disgust. Yet one got caught. As they detected the wax concealed and disguised in this composition, so they will receive the earliest

intelligence of the blossoming of the first flower which contains any sweetness for them. It is a genial and reassuring day; the mere warmth of the west wind amounts almost to balminess. The softness of the air mollifies our own dry and congealed substance. I sit down by a wall to see if I can *muse* again. We become, as it were, pliant and ductile again to strange but memorable influences; we are led a little way by our genius. We are affected like the earth, and yield to the elemental tenderness. Winter breaks up within us. The frost is coming out of me, and I am heaved like the road. Accumulated masses of ice and snow dissolve, and thoughts, like a freshet, pour down unwonted channels. A strain of music comes to solace the traveler over earth's downs and dignify his chagrins. The petty men whom he meets are shadows of grander to come. Roads lead elsewhere than to Carlisle and Sudbury. The earth is uninhabited, but fair to inhabit, like the old Carlisle road. Is, then, the road so rough that it should be neglected? Not only narrow, but rough, is the way that leadeth to life everlasting. Our experience does not wear upon us. It is seen to be fabulous or symbolical, and the future is worth expecting. Encouraged, I set out once more to climb the mountain of the earth, for my steps are sym-

bolical steps, and I have not reached the top of the earth yet.

In two or three places I hear the ground-squirrel's first chirrup or *qui vive* in the wall, like a bird or a cricket. Though I do not see him, the sun has reached him too.

Ah, then! as I was rising this crowning road, just beyond the old lime-kiln, there leaked into my open ear the faint peep of a hyla from some far pool. One little hyla, somewhere in the fens, aroused by the genial season, crawls up the bank or a bush, squats on a dry leaf, and essays a note or two which scarcely rends the air, does no violence to the zephyr, but yet leaks through all obstacles and far over the downs to the ear of the listening naturalist, as it were the first faint cry of the new-born year, notwithstanding the notes of birds. Where so long I have heard only the prattling and moaning of the wind, what means this tenser, far-piercing sound? All nature rejoices with one joy. If the hyla has revived again, why may not I?

Whatever your sex or position, life is a battle in which you are to show your pluck, and woe be to the coward. Whether passed on a bed of sickness or a tented field, it is ever the same fair play, and admits no foolish distinction. Despair and postponement are cowardice

and defeat. Men were born to succeed, not to fail.

March 21, 1854. At sunrise to Clam-shell Hill. River skimmed over at Willow Bay last night. Thought I should find ducks cornered up by the ice. They get behind this hill for shelter. Saw what looked like clods of ploughed meadow rising above the ice. Looked with glass and found it to be more than thirty black ducks asleep with their heads in their backs, motionless, thin ice being formed about them. Soon one or two were moving about slowly. There was an open space, eight or ten rods by one or two. At first all were within a space of apparently less than a rod in diameter. It was $6\frac{1}{2}$ A. M. and the sun shining on them, but bitter cold. How tough they are. I crawled far on my stomach and got a near view of them, thirty rods off. At length they detected me and quacked. Some got out upon the ice, and when I rose up, all took to flight in a great straggling flock, looking at a distance like crows, in no order. Yet when you see two or three, the parallelism produced by their necks and bodies steering the same way gives the idea of order.

March 21, 1855. The tree-sparrow, flitting song-sparrow-like through the alders, utters a sharp metallic *tcheep*.

March 21, 1856. 10 A. M. To my red maple sugar camp. Found that after a pint and a half had run from a single tube after 3 P. M. yesterday afternoon, it had frozen about half an inch thick, and this morning a quarter of a pint more had run. Between 10½ and 11½ A. M. this forenoon I caught two and three quarters pints more from six tubes at the same tree, though it is completely overcast, and threatening rain, — four and one half pints in all. The sap is an agreeable drink like iced water, by chance, with a pleasant but slightly sweetish taste. I boiled it down in the afternoon, and it made one and one half ounces of sugar, without any molasses. This appears to be the average amount yielded by the sugar maple in similar circumstances, *viz.*, on the south edge of a wood, and on a tree partly decayed, two feet in diameter. It is worth while to know that there is all this sugar in our woods, much of which might be obtained by using the refuse wood lying about, without damage to the proprietors, who use neither the sugar nor the wood. I put in saleratus and a little milk while boiling, the former to neutralize the acid, and the latter to collect the impurities in a scum. After boiling it till I burned it a little, and my small quantity would not flow when cool, but was as hard as half-done

candy, I put it on again, and in a minute it was softened and turned to sugar. Had a dispute with father about the *use* of my making this sugar when I knew it could be done, and might have bought sugar cheaper at Holden's. He said it took me from my studies. I said I made it my study and felt as if I had been to a university. The sap dropped from each tube about as fast as my pulse beat, and as there were three tubes directed to each vessel it flowed at the rate of about one hundred and eighty drops a minute into it. One maple, standing immediately north of a thick white pine, scarcely flowed at all, while a smaller one, farther in the wood, ran pretty well. The south side of a tree bleeds first in the spring. Had a three-quarter inch auger. Made a dozen spouts five or six inches long, hole as large as a pencil, and smoothed with one.

March 21, 1858. P. M. To Ministerial Swamp *via* Little River. I hear the pleasant phebe note of the chickadee. It is, methinks, more like a wilderness note than any other I have heard yet. It is peculiarly interesting that this, which is one of our winter birds also, should have a note with which to welcome the spring.

March 22, 1840. While I bask in the sun on the shores of Walden Pond, by this heat

and this rustle I am absolved from all obligation to the past. The council of nations may reconsider their votes. The grating of a pebble annuls them.

March 22, 1842. Nothing can be more useful to a man than a determination not to be hurried.

I have not succeeded if I have an antagonist who fails. It must be humanity's success.

I cannot think nor utter my thoughts unless I have infinite room. The cope of heaven is not too high, the sea is not too deep, for him who would unfold a great thought. It must feed me, and warm and clothe me. It must be an entertainment to which my whole nature is invited. I must know that the gods are to be my fellow-guests.

March 22, 1853. As soon as those spring mornings arrive in which the birds sing, I am sure to be an early riser, I am waked by my genius, I wake to inaudible melodies, and am surprised to find myself awaiting the dawn in so serene and joyful and expectant a mood. I have an appointment with Spring. She comes to the window to wake me, and I go forth an hour or two earlier than usual. It is by especial favor that I am waked, not rudely, but gently, as infants should be waked. . . . When we wake indeed with a double awaken

ing, not only from our ordinary nocturnal slumbers, but from our diurnal, we burst through the thallus of our ordinary life, we awake with emphasis. . . .

6 A. M. To Cliffs. It affects one's philosophy after so long living in winter quarters to see the day dawn from some hill. Our effete, lowland town is fresh as New Hampshire. It is as if we had migrated and were ready to begin life again in a new country with new hopes and resolutions. See your town with the dew on it, in as wild a morning mist (though thin) as ever draped it. To stay in the house all day such reviving spring days as the past have been, bending over a stove and gnawing one's heart, seems to me as absurd as for a woodchuck to linger in his burrow. We have not heard the news then! sucking the claws of our philosophy when there is game to be had.

The tapping of the woodpecker, *rat-tat-tat*, knocking at the door of some sluggish grub to tell him that the spring has arrived, and his fate, this is one of the season sounds, calling the roll of birds and insects, the reveille. The Cliff woods are comparatively silent. Not yet the woodland birds (except, perhaps, the woodpecker, so far as it migrates), only the orchard and river birds have arrived. Probably the improvements of men thus advance the seasons.

This is the Bahamas and the tropics or turning point to the redpoll. Is not the woodpecker (downy?) our first woodland bird, come to see what effects the frost and snow and rain have produced on the decaying trees, what trunks will drum? . . .

The oak plain is still red. There are no expanding leaves to greet and reflect the sun as it first falls over the hill.

I go along the river-side to see the now novel reflections. The invading waters have left a thousand little isles where willows and sweet gale and the meadow itself appears. I hear the phebe note of the chickadee, one taking it up behind another, as in a catch, *phe-bee phe-bee*.

That is an interesting morning when one first uses the warmth of the sun instead of fire, bathes in the sun as anon in the river, eschewing fire, draws up to the garret window and warms his thoughts at nature's great central fire, as does the buzzing fly by his side. Like it, too, our Muse, wiping the dust off her long unused wings, goes blundering through the cobwebs of criticism, more dusty still, and carries away the half of them. What venerable cobweb is that which has hitherto escaped the broom, whose spider is invisible, but the "North American Review"?

Hylodes Pickeringii, a name that is longer than the frog itself! A description of animals, too, from a dead specimen only, as if in a work on man you were to describe a dead man only, omitting his manners and customs, his institutions and divine faculties, from want of opportunity to observe them, suggesting, perhaps, that the colors of the eye are said to be much more brilliant in the living specimen, and that some cannibal, your neighbor, who has tried him on his table, has found him to be sweet and nutritious, good on the gridiron, having had no opportunity to observe his habits, because you do not live in the country. Nothing is known of his habits. Food—seeds of wheat, beef, pork, and potatoes.

I told Stacy the other day that there was another volume of De Quincey's "Essays," wanting to see it in his library. "I know it," says he, "but I shan't buy any more of them, for nobody reads them." I asked what book in his library was most read. He said, "The Wide, Wide World."

In a little dried and bleached tortoise shell about one and three fourths inches long I can easily study his anatomy and the house he lives in. His ribs are now distinctly revealed under his lateral scales, slanted like rafters to the ridge of his roof, for his sternum is so large

that his ribs are driven round upon his back. It is wonderful to see what a perfect piece of dovetailing his house is, the different plates of his shell fitting into each other by a thousand sharp teeth or serrations, and the scales always breaking joints over them so as to bind the whole firmly together, all parts of his abode variously interspliced and dovetailed. An architect might learn much from a faithful study of it. There are three large diamond-shaped openings down the middle of the sternum, covered only by the scales, through which perhaps he feels, he breasts the earth. His roof rests on four stout posts. This young one is very deep in proportion to its breadth.

March 22, 1855. P. M. Fair Haven Pond via Conantum. . . . On the steep hillside south of the pond I observed a rotten and hollow hemlock stump about two feet high, and six inches in diameter, and instinctively approached with my right hand ready to cover it. I found a flying squirrel in it, which, as my left hand covered a small hole at the bottom, ran directly into my right hand. It struggled and bit not a little, but my cotton gloves protected me, and I felt its teeth only once or twice. It also uttered three or four dry shrieks at first, something like *Cr-r-r-ack cr-r-r-ack cr-r-r-ack*. I rolled it up in my handkerchief, and holding

the ends tight carried it home in my hand, some three miles. It struggled more or less all the way, especially when my feet made any unusual or louder noise going through leaves, etc. I could count its claws as they appeared through the handkerchief, and once it put its head through a hole. It even bit through the handkerchief. Color, as I remember, a chestnut ash inclining to fawn or cream color, slightly browned. Beneath, white. The under edge of its wings (?) tinged yellow, the upper, dark, perhaps black, making a dark stripe. It was a very cunning little animal, reminding me of a mouse in the room. Its *very large* and *prominent black* eyes gave it an interesting, innocent look. Its very neat, flat, fawn-colored, distichous tail was a great ornament. Its "sails" were not very obvious when it was at rest, merely giving it a flat appearance beneath. It would leap off and upward into the air two or three feet from a table, spreading its "sails," and fall to the floor in vain, perhaps strike the side of the room in its upward spring and endeavor to cling to it. It would run up the window by the sash, but evidently found the furniture and walls and floor too hard and smooth for it, and, after some falls, became quiet. In a few moments it allowed me to stroke it, though far from confident. I put it

in a barrel and covered it up for the night. It was quite busy all the evening gnawing out, clinging for this purpose and gnawing at the upper edge of a sound oak barrel, and then dropping to rest from time to time. It had defaced the barrel considerably by morning, and would probably have escaped, if I had not placed a piece of iron against the gnawed part. I had left in the barrel some bread, apple, shagbarks, and cheese. It ate some of the apple and one shagbark, cutting it quite in two transversely. In the morning it was quiet, and squatted, somewhat curled up, amid the straw, with its tail passing under it and the end curved over its head, very prettily, as if to shield it from the light and keep it warm. I always found it in this position by day when I raised the lid.

March 23, 1855. Carried my flying squirrel back to the woods in my handkerchief. I placed it on the very stump I had taken it from. It immediately ran about a rod over the leaves and up a slender maple sapling about ten feet, then after a moment's pause sprang off and skimmed downward toward a large maple nine feet distant, whose trunk it struck three or four feet from the ground. This it rapidly ascended on the opposite side from me, nearly thirty feet, and then clung to the main stem with its head

downward, eying me. After two or three minutes' pause, I saw that it was preparing for another spring by raising its head and looking off, and away it went in admirable style, more like a bird than any quadruped I had dreamed of, and far surpassing the impression I had received from naturalists' accounts. I marked the spot it started from and the place where it struck, and measured the height and distance carefully. It sprang off from the maple at the height of twenty-eight feet and a half, and struck the ground at the foot of a tree fifty and one half feet distant, measured horizontally. Its flight was not a regular descent. It varied from a direct line both horizontally and vertically. Indeed, it skimmed much like a hawk, and part of its flight was nearly horizontal. It diverged from a right line eight or ten feet to the right, making a curve in that direction. There were six trees from six inches to a foot in diameter, one a hemlock, in a direct line between the termini, and these it skimmed partly round, passing through their thinner limbs. It did not, so far as I could perceive, touch a twig. It skimmed its way like a hawk between and around the trees. Though it was a windy day, this was on a steep hillside covered with wood and away from the wind, so it was not aided by that. As the ground rose about two feet,

the distance was to the absolute height as fifty and one half feet to twenty-six and one half feet, or it advanced about two feet for every foot of descent. After the various attempts in the house I was not prepared for this exhibition. It did not fall heavily as in the house, but struck the ground quietly enough, and I cannot believe that the mere extension of the skin enabled it to skim so far. It must be still further aided by its organization. Perhaps it fills itself with air first. . . . Kicking over the hemlock stump, which was a mere shell with holes below, and a poor refuge, I was surprised to find a little nest at the bottom, open above just like a bird's nest, a mere bed. It was composed of leaves, shreds of bark, and dead pine needles. As I *remember*, this squirrel was not more than an inch and a half broad when at rest, but when skimming through the air I should say it was four inches broad. This is the impression I now have. Captain J. Smith says it is reported to fly thirty or forty yards. One Gideon B. Smith, M. D., of Baltimore, who has had much to do with these squirrels, speaks of their curving upward at the end of their flight to alight on a tree trunk, and of their "flying" into his windows. In order to perform all these flights, to strike a tree at such a distance, etc., etc., it is evident it must

be able to steer. I should say that mine steered like a hawk, that moves without flapping its wings, never being able, however, to get a new impetus after the first spring.

March 22, 1860. Some of the phenomena of an average March are increasing warmth, melting the snow and ice, and gradually the frost in the ground; cold and blustering weather, with high, commonly northwest winds for many days together; misty and other rains taking out frost, whitenings of snow, and winter often back again, both its cold and snow; bare ground and open waters, and more or less of a freshet; some calm and pleasant days reminding us of summer, with a blue haze or a thicker mist over the woods *at last*, in which, perchance, we take off our coats a while, and sit without a fire; the ways getting settled, and some greenness appearing on south banks; April-like rains after the frost is chiefly out; ploughing and planting of peas, etc., just beginning, and the old leaves getting dry in the woods.

March 22, 1861. A driving northeast snow storm yesterday and last night, and to-day the drifts are high over the fences, and the trains stopped. The Boston train due at 8½ A. M. did not reach here till 5 this P. M. One side of all the houses this morning was one color, *i. e.*,

white, with the moist snow plastered over them so that you could not tell whether they had blinds or not.

When we consider how soon some plants which spread rapidly by seeds or roots would cover an area equal to the surface of the globe, how soon some species of trees, as the white willow, for instance, would equal in mass the earth itself, if all their seeds became full-grown trees, how soon some fishes would fill the ocean if all their ova became full-grown fishes, we are tempted to say that every organism, whether animal or vegetable, is contending for the possession of the planet, and if any one were sufficiently favored, supposing it still possible to grow as at first, it would at length convert the entire mass of the globe into its own substance. Nature opposes to this many obstacles, as climate, myriads of brute and also human foes, and of competitors which may preoccupy the ground. Each species suggests an immense and wonderful greediness and tenacity of life, as if bent on taking entire possession of the globe wherever the climate and soil will permit; and each prevails as much as it does, because of the ample preparations it has made for the contest. It has received a myriad chances, because it never depends on spontaneous generation to save it.

March 23, 1853. 5 A. M. I hear the robin sing before I rise. 6 A. M. Up the North River. A fresh, cool, spring morning. The white maple may, perhaps, be said to begin to blossom to-day, the male, for the stamens, both anthers and filaments, are conspicuous on some buds. It has opened unexpectedly, and a rich sight it is, looking up through the expanded buds to the sky. This and the aspen are the first trees that ever grow large, I believe, which show the influence of the season thus conspicuously. From Nawshawtuck I see the snow is off the mountains. A large aspen by the island is unexpectedly forward. I already see the red anthers appearing. It will bloom in a day or two.

One studies books of science merely to learn the language of naturalists, to be able to communicate with them.

The frost in swamps and meadows makes it good walking there still. Away, away to the swamps where the silver catkins of the swamp willow shine a quarter of a mile off, those southward penetrating vales of Rupert's Land. The birds, which are merely migratory or tarrying here for a season, are especially gregarious now, the redpoll, *Fringilla hiemalis*, fox-colored sparrow, etc. I judge by the dead bodies of frogs partially devoured in brooks and ditches that many are killed in their hibernacula.

Evelyn and others wrote when the language was in a tender, nascent state, and could be moulded to express the shades of meaning; when sesquipedalian words, long since cut and apparently dried and drawn to mill, not yet to the dictionary lumber-yard, put forth a fringe of green sprouts here and there along in the angles of their rugged bark, their very bulk insuring some sap remaining; some florid suckers they sustain at least. These words, split into shingles and laths, will supply poets for ages to come.

A man can't ask properly for a piece of bread and butter without some animal spirits. A child can't cry without them.

P. M. To Howard's Meadow. The telegraph harp sounds more commonly now that westerly winds prevail. The winds of winter are too boisterous, too violent or rude, and do not strike it at the right angle when I walk, so that it becomes one of the spring sounds. The ice went out of Walden this forenoon; of Flint's Pond day before yesterday, I have no doubt.

The buds of the shad-blossom look green. The crimson-starred flowers of the hazel begin to peep out, though the catkins have not opened. The alders are almost generally in full bloom, and a very handsome and interesting

show they make with their graceful tawny pendants inclining to yellow. They shake like ear-drops in the wind, almost the first completed ornaments with which the new year decks herself. Their yellow pollen is shaken down and colors my coat like sulphur as I pass through them. I go to look for mud-turtles in Heywood's Meadow. The alder catkins just burst open are prettily marked spirally by streaks of yellow, contrasting with alternate rows of rich reddish brown scales, which make one revolution in the length of the catkin. I hear in Heywood's north meadow the most unmusical low croak from one or two frogs, though it is half ice there yet. A remarkable note with which to greet the new year, as if one's teeth slid off with a grating sound in cracking a nut, but not a frog nor a dimple to be seen.

Man cannot afford to be a naturalist, to look at Nature directly, but only with the side of his eye. He must look through and beyond her. To look at her is as fatal as to look at the head of Medusa. It turns the man of science to stone. I feel that I am dissipated by so many observations. I should be the magnet in the midst of all this dust and filings. I knock the back of my hand against a rock, and as I smooth back the skin I find myself prepared to study lichens there. I look upon man but as

a fungus. I have almost a slight, dry headache as the result of all this observation. How to observe is how to behave. Oh, for a little Lethe. To crown all, lichens which are so thin are described in the *dry* state, as they are most commonly, not most truly seen. They are, indeed, *dryly* described.

Without being the owner of any land, I find that I have a civil right in the river, that if I am not a land-owner I am a water-owner. It is fitting, therefore, that I should have a boat, a cart, for this my farm. Since it is almost wholly given up to a few of us, while the other highways are much traveled, no wonder that I improve it. Such a one as I will choose to dwell in a township where there are most ponds and rivers, and our range is widest. In relation to the river, I find my natural rights least infringed on. It is an extensive "common" still left. Certain savage liberties still prevail in the oldest and most civilized countries. I am pleased to find that in Gilbert White's day, at least, the laborers in that part of England where he lived enjoyed certain rights of common in the royal forests, so called, where they cut their turf and other fuel, etc., though no large wood, and obtained materials for broom-making, etc., when other labor failed. It is no longer so, according to the editor.

The cat-tail down puffs and swells in your hand like a mist, or the conjurer's trick of filling a hat with feathers, for when you have rubbed off but a thimbleful, and can close and conceal the wound completely, the expanded down fills your hand to overflowing. Apparently there is a spring to the fine elastic threads which compose the down, which, after having been so long closely packed, on being the least relieved, spring open apace into the form of parachutes to convey the seed afar. Where birds, or the winds, or ice have assaulted them, this has spread like an eruption.

March 23, 1856. I spend a considerable portion of my time observing the habits of the wild animals, my brute neighbors. By their various movements and migrations they fetch the year about to me. Very significant are the flight of geese and the migration of suckers, etc. But when I consider that the nobler animals have been exterminated here, the cougar, panther, lynx, wolverene, wolf, bear, moose, deer, beaver, turkey, etc., etc., I cannot but feel as if I lived in a tamed and, as it were, emasculated country. Would not the motions of those larger and wilder animals have been more significant still? Is it not a maimed and imperfect nature that I am conversant with? As if I were to study a tribe of Indians that

had lost all its warriors. Do not the forest and the meadow now lack expression? now that I never see nor think of the moose with a lesser forest on his head in the one, nor of the beaver in the other? When I think what were the various sounds and notes, the migrations and works, and changes of fur and plumage, which ushered in the spring and marked the other seasons of the year, I am reminded that this my life in nature, this particular round of natural phenomena which I call a year, is lamentably incomplete. I listen to a concert in which so many parts are wanting. The whole civilized country is, to some extent, turned into a city, and I am that citizen whom I pity. Many of those animal migrations and other phenomena by which the Indians marked the season are no longer to be observed. I seek acquaintance with Nature to know her moods and manners. Primitive nature is the most interesting to me. I take infinite pains to know all the phenomena of the spring, for instance, thinking that I have here the entire poem, and then, to my chagrin, I learn that it is but an imperfect copy that I possess and have read, that my ancestors have torn out many of the first leaves and grandest passages, and mutilated it in many places. I should not like to think that some demigod had come before me and picked out

some of the best of the stars. I wish to know an entire heaven and an entire earth. All the great trees and beasts, fishes and fowl are gone; the streams perchance are somewhat shrunk.

P. M. To Walden. I think I may say that the snow has not been less than a foot deep on a level in open land until to-day, since January 6th, about eleven weeks. I am reassured and reminded that I am the heir of eternal inheritances which are inalienable, when I feel the warmth reflected from this sunny bank, and see the yellow sand and the reddish subsoil, and hear some dried leaves rustle and the trickling of melting snow in some sluiceway. The eternity which I detect in nature I predicate of myself also. How many springs I have had this same experience! I am encouraged, for I recognize this steady persistency and recovery of nature as a quality of myself. Now the steep south hillsides begin to be bare, and the early sedge and the sere, but still fragrant, pennyroyal and rustling leaves are exposed, and you see where the mice have sheared off the sedge, and also made nests of its top during the winter. There, too, the partridges resort, and perhaps you hear the bark of a striped squirrel, and see him scratch toward his hole, rustling the leaves: for all the inhabitants of nature are attracted by this bare and dry spot as well as you.

The muskrat houses were certainly very few and small last summer, and the river has been remarkably low up to this time, while the previous fall they were very numerous and large, and in the succeeding winter the river rose remarkably high. So much for the muskrat sign.

March 23, 1859. P. M. Walk to Cardinal Shore, and sail to Well Meadow and Lee's Cliff. As we entered Well Meadow we saw a hen-hawk perch on the topmost plume of the tall pines at the head of the meadow; soon another appeared, probably its mate, but we looked in vain for a nest there. It was a fine sight, their soaring above our heads, presenting a perfect outline and, as they came round, showing their rust-colored tails with a whitish rump, or, as they sailed away from us, that slight tetering or quivering motion of their dark-tipped wings, seen edgewise, now on this side, now on that, by which they balanced and directed themselves. These are the most eagle-like of our common hawks. They very commonly perch upon the very topmost plume of a pine, and, if motionless, are rather hard to distinguish there.

While reconnoitring we hear the peep of one hylodes somewhere in the sheltered recess in the woods, and afterward, on the Lee side shore, a single croak from a wood-frog.

We cross to Lee's shore and sit upon the bare rocky ridge overlooking the flood southwest and northeast. It is quite sunny and sufficiently warm. The prospect thence is a fine one, especially at this season when the water is high. The landscape is very agreeably diversified with hill and dale, meadow and cliff. As we look southwest how attractive the shores of russet capes and peninsulas laved by the flood. Indeed, that large tract east of the bridge is now an island. How firm that low, undulating, russet-land! At this season and under these circumstances, the sun just come out and the flood high around it, russet, so reflecting the light of the sun, appears to me the most agreeable of colors, and I begin to dream of a russet fairy-land and Elysium. How dark and terrene must be green, but this smooth russet reflects almost all the light. That broad and low, but firm island, with but few trees to conceal the contour of the ground and its outline, with its fine russet sward, firm and soft as velvet, reflecting so much light; all the undulations of the earth, its nerves and muscles revealed by the light and shade, and the sharper ridgy edge of steep banks where the plough has heaped up the earth from year to year, this is a sort of fairy-land and Elysium to my eye. The tawny, couchant island! Dry land for the

Indian's wigwam in the spring, and still strewn with his arrow-points. The sight of such land reminds me of the pleasant spring days in which I have walked over such tracts looking for these relics. How well, too, the smooth, firm, light-reflecting, tawny earth contrasts with the darker water which surrounds it, or perchance lighter sometimes. At this season, when the russet colors prevail, the contrast of water and land is more agreeable to behold. What an inexpressibly soft curving line is the shore! and if the water is perfectly smooth and yet rising, you seem to see it raised one eighth of an inch with swelling lip above the immediate shore it kisses, as in a cup. Indian isles and promontories. Thus we sit on that rock, hear the first wood-frog's croak, and dream of a russet Elysium. Enough for the season is the beauty thereof.

The qualities of the land that are most attractive to our eyes now are dryness and firmness. It is not the rich, black soil, but warm and sandy hills and plains which tempt our steps. We love to sit on and walk over sandy tracts in the spring, like cicindelas. These tongues of russet land tapering and sloping into the flood do almost speak to one. They are alternately in sun and shade. When the cloud is passed and they reflect their pale brown light to me, I am tempted to go to them. . . . I see the shadow

of a cloud, and it chances to be a hollow ring with sunlight in its midst, passing over the hilly sproutland toward the Baker house, a sproutland of oaks and birches ; and, owing to the color of the birch twigs, perhaps, the russet changes to a dark purplish tint as the cloud moves along. And then as I look further along eastward in the horizon, I am surprised to see strong purple and violet tinges in the sun from a hillside a mile off, densely covered with full-grown birches. I would not have believed that under the spring sun so many colors were brought out. It is not the willows only that shine, but, under favorable circumstances, many other twigs, even a mile or two off. The dense birches, so far that their white stems are not distinct, reflect deep, strong purple and violet colors from the distant hillsides opposite to the sun. Can this have to do with the sap flowing in them?

As we sit there, we see coming swift and straight northeast along the river valley, not seeing us and therefore not changing his course, a male goosander, so near that the green reflections of his head and neck are plainly visible. He looks like a paddle-wheel steamer, so oddly painted, black and white and green, and moves along swift and straight, like one. Erelong the same returns with his mate, the red-throated, the male taking the lead. The loud

peep (?) of a pigeon woodpecker is heard, and anon the prolonged loud and shrill cackle calling the thin-wooded hillsides and pastures to life. It is like the note of an alarm clock set last fall so as to wake nature up at exactly this date, *Up up up up up up up up up!* What a rustling it seems to make among the dry leaves. . . . Then I see come slowly flying from the southwest a great gull, of voracious form, which at length, by a sudden and steep descent, alights in Fair Haven Pond, scaring up a crow which was seeking its food on the edge of the ice.

March 24, 1842. Those authors are successful who do not write down to others, but make their own taste and judgment their audience. By some strange infatuation we forget that we do not approve what yet we recommend to others. It is enough if I please myself with writing; I am then sure of an audience.

It is always singular to meet common sense in the very old books, as in the "Veeshnoo Sarma," as if they could have dispensed with the experience of later times. We had not given space enough to their antiquity for the accumulation of wisdom. We meet even a trivial wisdom in them as if truth were already hackneyed. The present is always younger than antiquity. A playful wisdom, which has eyes behind as well as before, and oversees itself.

The wise can afford to doubt in his wisest moment. The easiness of doubt is the ground of his assurance. Faith keeps many doubts in her pay. If I could not doubt I should not believe.

It is seen in the old scripture how wisdom is older than the talent of composition. The story is as slender as the thread on which pearls are strung; it is a spiral line growing more and more perplexed till it winds itself up and dies like the silkworm in its cocoon. It seems as if the old philosopher could not talk without moving, and each motion were made the apology or occasion for a sentence, but this being found inconvenient, the fictitious progress of the tale was invented.

The great thoughts of a wise man seem to the vulgar who do not generalize to stand far apart like isolated mounts, but science knows that the mountains which rise so solitary in our midst are parts of a great mountain chain, dividing the earth, and the eye that looks into the horizon toward the blue Sierra melting away in the distance may detect their flow of thought. These sentences which take up your common life so easily are not seen to run into ridges because they are the table-land on which the spectator stands. . . . That they stand frowning upon one another or mutually reflecting the

sun's rays is proof enough of their common basis.

The book should be found where the sentence is, and its connection be as inartificial. It is the inspiration of a day and not of a moment. The links should be gold also. Better that the good be not united than that a bad man be admitted into their society. When men can select, they will. If there be any stone in the quarry better than the rest they will forsake the rest because of it. Only the good will be quarried.

March 24, 1853. In many cases I find that the willow cones are a mere dense cluster of loose leaves, suggesting that the scales of cones of all kinds are only modified leaves, a crowding and stinting of the leaves, as the stem becomes a thorn, and in this view those conical bunches of leaves of so many of the pine family have relation to the cones of the tree in origin as well as in form. The leaf, perchance, becomes calyx, cone, husk, and nutshell.

March 24, 1855. Passing up the Assabet by the hemlocks where there has been a slide and some rocks have slid down into the river, I think I see how rocks come to be found in the midst of rivers. Rivers are continually changing their channels, eating into one bank and adding their sediment to the other, so that fre-

quently where there is a great bend, you see a high and steep bank or hill on one side which the river washes, and a broad meadow on the other. As the river eats into the hill, especially in freshets, it undermines the rocks, large and small, and they slide down alone or with the sand and soil to the water's edge. The river continues to eat into the hill, carrying away all the lighter parts, the sand and soil, to add to its meadows or islands somewhere, but leaves the rocks where they rested, and thus, in course of time, they occupy the middle of the stream, and later still the mud of the meadow, perchance, though they may be buried under the mud. But this does not explain how so many rocks lying in streams have been split in the direction of the current. Again rivers appear to have traveled back and worn into the meadows of their own creating, and then they become more meandering than ever. Thus, in the course of ages, the river wriggles in its bed till it feels comfortable. Time is cheap and rather insignificant. It matters not whether it is a river which changes from side to side in a geological period, or an eel that wriggles past in an instant. . . .

It is too cold to think of those signs of spring which I find recorded under this date last year. The earliest of such signs in vegetation, noticed

thus far, are the maple sap, the willow catkins and those of the poplar (not examined early), *the celandine* (?), *grass on south banks*, and perhaps cowslip in sheltered places, alder catkins loosened, and also white maple buds loosened. I am not sure that the osiers are decidedly brighter yet.

March 24, 1857. If you are describing any occurrence or a man, make two or more distinct reports at different times. Though you may think you have said all, you will to-morrow remember a whole new class of facts which perhaps interested most of all at the time, but did not present themselves to be reported. If we have recently met and talked with a man and would report our experience, we commonly make a very partial report at first, failing to seize the most significant, picturesque, and dramatic points. We describe only what we have had time to digest and dispose of in our minds, without being conscious that there were other things really more novel and interesting to us, which will not fail to occur to us and impress us suitably at last. How little that occurs to us are we prepared at once to appreciate. We discriminate at first only a few features, and we need to reconsider our experience from many points of view and in various moods to preserve the whole force of it.

March 24, 1858. P. M. To Fair Haven Pond, east side. The pond not yet open. A cold north-by-west wind which must have come over much snow and ice. The *chip* of the song-sparrow resembles that of the robin, *i. e.*, its expression is the same, only fainter, and reminds me that the robin's *peep*, which sounds like a note of distress, is also a chip or call note to its kind.

Returning about 5 P. M. across the Depot Field, I scare up from the ground a flock of about twenty birds which fly low, making a short circuit to another part of the field. At first they remind me of bay-wings, except that they are in a flock, show no white in tail, are, I see, a little larger, and utter a faint *sweet sweet* merely, a sort of sibilant *chip*. Starting them again, I see that they have black tails, very conspicuous when they pass here. They fly in the flock somewhat like snow buntings, occasionally one surging upward a few feet in pursuit of another, and they alight about where they first were. It is almost impossible to distinguish them upon the ground, they squat so flat, and so much resemble it, running amid the stubble. But at length I stand within two rods of one and get a good view of its markings with my glass. They are the *Alauda alpestris* or shore lark, a quite sizable and handsome bird.

A delicate, pale, lemon-yellow line above, with a dark line through the eye. The yellow again on the sides of the neck and on the throat, with a buff-ash breast and reddish brown tinges. Beneath, white. Above, rusty brown behind, and darker, ash or slate with purplish brown reflections, forward. Legs black. Bill blue and black. Common to the old and new world.

March 24, 1859. Now when the leaves get to be dry and rustle under your feet, the peculiar dry note *wurrk wurrk wur r r k wurk*, of the wood-frog is heard faintly by ears on the alert, borne up from some unseen pool in a woodland hollow which is open to the influences of the sun. It is a singular sound for awakening nature to make, associated with the first warmer days when you sit in some sheltered place in the woods amid the dried leaves. How moderate on her first awakening, how little demonstrative! You may sit half an hour before you will hear another. You doubt if the season will be long enough for such oriental and luxurious slowness. But they get on nevertheless, and by to-morrow or in a day or two they croak louder and more frequently. Can you be sure that you have heard the very first wood-frog in the township croak? Ah, how weather-wise must he be! There is no guessing at the weather with him. He makes the

weather in his degree, he encourages it to be mild. The weather, what is it but the temperament of the earth? and he is wholly of the earth, sensitive as its skin in which he lives, and of which he is a part. His life relaxes with the thawing ground. He pitches and tunes his voice to chord with the rustling leaves which the March wind has dried. Long before the frost is quite out he feels the influence of the spring rains and the warmer days. His is the very voice of the weather. He rises and falls like quicksilver in the thermometer. You do not perceive the spring so surely in the actions of men, their lives are so artificial. They may make more or less fire in their parlors, and their feelings accordingly are not good thermometers. The frog far away in the wood, that burns no coal nor wood, perceives more surely the general and universal changes.

There sits on the bank of the ditch a *Rana fontinalis*. He is mainly a bronze brown, with a very dark greenish snout, etc.; with the raised line down the side of the back. This, methinks, is about the only frog which the marsh hawk could have found hitherto.

March 25, 1842. Great persons are not soon learned, not even their outlines, but they change like the mountains in the horizon as we ride along.

Comparatively speaking, I care not for the man or his designs who would make the highest use of me short of an all adventuring friendship. I wish by the behavior of my friend toward me to be led to have such regard for myself as for a box of precious ointment. I shall not be as cheap to myself if I see that another values me.

We talk much about education, and yet none will assume the office of an educator. I never gave any one the whole advantage of myself. I never afforded him the culture of my love. How can I talk of charity who at last withhold the kindness which alone makes charity desirable. The poor want nothing less than me myself, and I shirk charity by giving rags and meat. What can I give or what deny to another but myself?

That person who alone can understand you you cannot get out of your mind.

The artist must work with indifference. Too great interest vitiates his work.

March 25, 1858. P. M. I see many fox-colored sparrows flitting past in a straggling manner into the birch and pine woods on the left, and hear a sweet warble there from time to time. They are busily scratching like hens amid the dry leaves of that wood (not swampy), from time to time the rearmost moving forward

one or two at a time, while a few are perched here and there on the lower branches of a birch or other tree, and I hear a very low and sweet whistling strain, commonly half-finished, from one every two or three minutes.

You might frequently say of a poet away from home that he was as mute as a bird of passage, uttering a mere *chip* from time to time, but follow him to his true habitat, and you shall not know him, he will sing so melodiously.

March 25, 1859. A score of my townsmen have been shooting and trapping musquash and mink of late. They are gone all day; early and late they scan the rising tide; stealthily they set their traps in remote swamps, avoiding one another. Am not I a trapper, too? early and late scanning the rising flood, ranging by distant woodsides, setting my traps in solitude, and baiting them as well as I know how, that I may catch life and light, that my intellectual part may taste some venison and be invigorated, that my nakedness may be clad in some wild furry warmth?

As to the color of spring, I should say that hitherto in dry weather it was fawn-colored; in wet, more yellowish or tawny. When wet, the green of the fawn is supplied by the lichens and the mosses.

March 26, 1842. I thank God that the

cheapness which appears in time and the world, the trivialness of the whole scheme of things, is in my own cheap and trivial moment. I am time and the world. In me are summer and winter, village life, and commercial routine, pestilence and famine, and refreshing breezes, joy and sadness, life and death.

I must confess I have felt mean enough when asked how I was to act on society, what errand I had to mankind. Undoubtedly I did not feel mean without a reason, and yet my loitering is not without a defense. I would fain communicate the wealth of my life to men, would really give them what is most precious in my gift. I would secrete pearls with the shellfish and lay up honey with the bees for them. I will sift the sunbeams for the public good. I know no riches I would keep back. I have no private good unless it be my peculiar ability to serve the public. This is the only individual property. Each one may thus be innocently rich. I inclose and foster the pearl till it is grown. I wish to communicate those parts of my life which I would gladly live again.

It is hard to be a good citizen of the world in any great sense, but if we do render no interest or increase to mankind out of that talent God gave us, we can at least preserve the principal unimpaired.

In such a letter as I like there will be the most naked and direct speech, the least circumlocution.

March 26, 1853. Up the Assabet, scared from his perch a stout hawk, the red-tailed, undoubtedly, for I saw very plainly the cow-red when he spread his wings from off his tail (and rump?). I rowed the boat three times within gunshot before he flew, twice within four rods, while he sat on an oak over the water; I think because I had two ladies with me, which was as good as bushing the boat. He was an interesting, eagle-like object as he sat upright on his perch with his back to us, now and then looking over his shoulder, the broad-backed, flat-headed, curve-beaked bird.

March 26, 1855. 6 A. M. Still cold and blustering. I see a muskrat house just erected, two feet or more above the water, and sharp. At the Hubbard Path a mink comes tetering along the ice by the side of the river. I am between him and the sun, and he does not notice me. He seems daintily lifting his feet with a jerk as if his toes were sore. They seem to go a-hunting at night along the edge of the river. Perhaps I notice them more at this season, when the shallow water freezes at night, and there is no vegetation along the shore to conceal them.

The lark sings perched on the top of an apple-tree, *seel-yah seel-yah*, and then perhaps *seel-yah-see-e*, and several other strains quite sweet and plaintive, contrasting with the cheerless season and the bleak meadow. Farther off I hear one with notes like *ah-tick-seel-yah*.

P. M. Sail down to the Great Meadows. A strong wind with snow driving from the west and thickening the air. The farmers pause to see me scud before it. At last I land and walk further down on the meadow bank. . . . I notice the paths made by the muskrats when the water was high in the winter, leading from the river up the bank to a bed of grass, above or below the surface. When it runs under the surface I frequently slump into it, and can trace it to the bed by the hollow sound when I stamp on the frozen ground. They have disfigured the banks very much in some places the past winter. Clams have been carried into these galleries a rod or more under the earth. When the ice still remained thick over the galleries, after the water had gone down, they kept on the surface and terminated, perhaps, at some stump where the earth was a little raised.

March 26, 1856. The Romans introduced husbandry into England where but little was practiced before, and the English have introduced it into America. So we may well read

the Roman authors for a history of this art as practiced by us.

I am sometimes affected by the consideration that a man may spend the whole of his life after boyhood in accomplishing a particular design, as if he were put to a special and petty use, without taking time to look around him and appreciate the phenomenon of his existence. If so many purposes are thus necessarily left unaccomplished, perhaps unthought of, we are reminded of the transient interest we have in this life. Our interest in our country, the spread of liberty, etc., strong, and, as it were, innate as it is, cannot be as transient as our present existence here. It cannot be that all those patriots who die in the midst of their career have no further connection with the career of their country.

March 26, 1857. As I lay on the fine dry sedge in the sun in a deep and sheltered hollow, I heard one fine, faint peep from over the windy ridge between the hollow in which I lay and the swamp, which at first I referred to a bird, and looked round at the bushes which crowned the brim of this hollow to find it, but ere long a regularly but faintly repeated *phe, phe, phe, phe*, revealed the *Hylodes Pickeringii*. It was like the light reflected from the mountain ridges within the shaded portion of the moon, forerun-

ner and herald of the spring. You take your walk some pretty cold and windy, but sunny, March day through rustling woods, perhaps, glad to take shelter in the hollows or on the south side of hills or woods. When ensconced in some sunny and sheltered hollow with some just-melted pool at its bottom, as you recline on the fine withered sedge in which the mice have had their galleries, leaving it pierced with countless holes, and are, perchance, dreaming of spring there, a single dry hard croak, like a grating twig, comes up from the pool. Where there is a small, smooth surface of melted ice bathing the bare button bushes, or water andromeda, or tufts of sedge, such is the earliest voice of the liquid pools, hard and dry and grating. Unless you watch long and closely, not a ripple nor a bubble will be seen, and a marsh hawk will have to look long to find one. The notes of the croaking frog and the hylodes are not only contemporary with, but analogous to, the blossom of the skunk-cabbage and white maple.

March 26, 1860. This dry, whitish, tawny or drab color of the fields, withered grass lit by the sun, is the color of a teamster's coat. It is one of the most interesting effects of light now, when the sun, coming out of clouds, shines brightly on it. It is the *fore-glow* of the year.

There is certainly a singular propriety in that color for the coat of a farmer or teamster, a hunter or shepherd, who is required to be much abroad in our landscape at this season. It is in harmony with nature, and you are less conspicuous in the fields and can get nearer wild animals for it. For this reason I am the better satisfied with the color of my hat, a drab, than with that of my companion, which is black, though his coat is of the exact tint, and better than mine. But, again, my dusty boots harmonize better with the landscape than his black and glossy India-rubbers. I had a suit once in which, methinks, I could glide across the fields unperceived half a mile in front of a farmer's windows. It was such a skillful mixture of browns, dark and light, properly proportioned, with even some threads of green in it, by chance. It was of loose texture and about the color of a pasture with patches of withered sweet fern and lechea. I trusted a good deal to my invisibility in it when going across lots, and many a time I was aware that to it I owed the near approach of wild animals.

No doubt my dusty and tawny cowhides surprise the street walkers who wear patent-leather congress shoes, but they do not consider how absurd such shoes would be in my vocation, to thread the woods and swamps in. C—— was

saying properly enough the other day, as we were making our way through a dense patch of shrub oak, "I suppose that those villagers think we wear these old, worn hats with holes all along the corners for oddity; but Coombs, the musquash hunter and partridge and rabbit snarer, knows better. He understands us. He knows that a new and square-cornered hat would be spoiled in one excursion through the shrub oaks." When a citizen comes to take a walk with me, I commonly find that he is lame and disabled by his shoeing. He is sure to wet his feet, tear his coat, and jam his hat, and the superior qualities of my boots, coat, and hat appear. I once went into the woods with a party for a fortnight. I wore my old and common clothes, which were of Vermont gray. They wore, no doubt, the best they had for such an occasion, of a fashionable color and quality. I thought that they were a little ashamed of me while we were in the towns. They all tore their clothes badly but myself, and I, who, it chanced, was the only one provided with needles and thread, enabled them to mend them. When we came out of the woods I was the best dressed of the party.

One of the most interesting sights this P. M. is the color of the yellow sand in the sun at the bottom of Nut Meadow and Second Division

brooks. The yellow sands of a lonely brook, seen through the rippling water, with the shadows of the ripples like films passing over it.

Tried by various tests this season fluctuates. Thus the skunk-cabbage may flower March 2, as in 1860, or not till April 6 or 8, as in 1854 and 1855, a variation of about thirty-six days.

The bluebird may be seen February 24, as in 1850, 1857, and 1860, or not till March 24, as in 1856, a variation of about twenty-eight days.

The yellow-spotted tortoise may be seen February 23, as in 1857, or not till March 28, as in 1855, a variation of thirty-three days.

The wood-frog may be heard March 15, as this year, or not till April 13, as in 1856, a variation of twenty-nine days.

Thus tried by these four tests, March fluctuates about a month, receding into February or advancing into April.

March 27, 1840. Think how finite, after all, the known world is. Money coined at Philadelphia is a legal tender over how much of it. You may carry ship-biscuit, beef, and pork quite round to the place you set out from. England sends her felons to the other side for safe-keeping and convenience.

March 27, 1841. Magnanimity, though it look expensive for a short course, is always economy in the long run. To make up a great

action there are no subordinate mean ones. We can never afford to postpone a true life to-day to any future and anticipated nobleness. We think if by tight economy we can manage to arrive at independence, then indeed we will begin to be generous without stay. We sacrifice all nobleness to a little present meanness. If a man charge you \$800 pay him \$850, and it will leave a clean edge to the sum. It will be like nature, overflowing and rounded like the bank of a river, not close and *precise* like a bank or ditch.

It is always a *short* step to peace of mind.

I must not lose any of my freedom by being a farmer and landholder. Most who enter on any profession are doomed men. The world might as well sing a dirge over them forthwith. The farmer's muscles are rigid; he can do one thing long, not many well. His pace seems determined henceforth. He never quickens it. A very rigid Nemesis is his fate. When the right wind blows, or a star calls, I can leave this arable and grass ground without making a will or settling my estate. I would buy a farm as freely as a silken streamer. Let me not think my front windows must face east henceforth because a particular hill slopes that way. My life must undulate still. I will not feel that my wings are clipped when once I have

settled on ground which the law calls my own, but find new pinions grown to the old, and talaria to my feet beside.

Sunday, March 27, 1842. The eye must be firmly anchored to this earth which beholds birches and pines waving in the breeze in a certain light, a serene, rippling light.

Cliffs. The little hawks have just come out to play, like butterflies rising one above the other in endless alternation, far below me. They swoop from side to side in the broad basin of the tree-tops, with wider and wider surges, as if swung by an invisible pendulum. They stoop down on this side and scale up on that. Suddenly I look up and see a new bird, probably an eagle, quite above me, laboring with the wind not more than forty rods off. It was the largest bird of the falcon kind I ever saw. I was never so impressed by any flight. She sailed the air, and fell back from time to time like a ship on her beam-ends, holding her talons up as if ready for the arrows. I never allowed before for the grotesque attitude of our national bird. The eagle must have an educated eye.

See what a life the gods have given us, set round with pain and pleasure. It is too strange for sorrow, it is too strange for joy. One while it looks as shallow, though as intri-

cate, as a Cretan labyrinth, and again it is a pathless depth. I ask for bread incessantly, that my life sustain me as much as meat my body. No man knoweth in what hour his life may come. Say not that Nature is trivial, for to-morrow she will be radiant with beauty.

March 27, 1853. . . . P. M. To Martial Miles's. . . . The hazel is fully out. The 23d was perhaps full early to date them. It is in some respects the most interesting flower yet, though so minute that only an observer of nature, or one who looked for them, would notice it. It is the most highly and richly colored yet, ten or a dozen little rays at the end of the buds, which are at the ends and along the sides of the bare stems. Some of the flowers are a light, some a dark crimson. The high color of this minute, unobserved flower at this cold, leafless, and almost flowerless season! It is a beautiful greeting of the spring, when the catkins are scarcely relaxed and there are no signs of life in the bush. Moreover, they are so tender that I never get one home in good condition. They wilt and turn black.

Tried to see the faint-croaking frogs at J. P. Brown's pond in the woods. They are remarkably timid and shy; had their noses and eyes out, croaking, but all ceased, dived, and concealed themselves, before I got within a rod of

the shore. Stood perfectly still amid the bushes on the shore before one showed himself; finally five or six. All eyed me and gradually approached me within three feet to reconnoitre. Though I waited about half an hour, they would not utter a sound nor take their eyes off me, plainly affected by curiosity. Dark brown, and some, perhaps, dark green, about two inches long. Had their noses and eyes out when they croaked. If described at all, they must be either young of *Rana pipiens* or *Rana palustris*.

March 27, 1857. . . . I would fain make two reports in my journal: first, the incidents and observations of to-day, and by to-morrow I review the same and record what was omitted before, which will often be the most significant and poetic part. I do not know at first what it is that charms me. The men and things of to-day are wont to be fairer and truer in to-morrow's memory.

Men talk to me about society, as if I had none and they had some, as if it were only to be got by going to the sociable or to Boston.

Compliments and flattery oftenest excite my contempt by the pretension they imply, for who is he that assumes to flatter me? To compliment often implies an assumption of superiority in the complimenter. It is, in fact, a subtle detraction.

March 27, 1858. P. M. Sail to Bittern Cliff. Scare up a flock of sheldrakes just off Fair Haven Hill, the conspicuous white ducks, sailing straight hither and thither. . . . Soon after, we scare up a flock of black ducks. We land and steal over the hill through the woods, expecting to find them under Lee's Cliff, as indeed we do, having crawled over the hill through the woods on our stomachs. There we watched various waterfowl for an hour. There are a dozen sheldrakes (or goosanders), and among them four or five females. They are now pairing. I should say one or two pairs are made. At first we see only a male and female quite on the alert, some way out on the pond, tacking back and forth, and looking every way. They keep close together, headed one way, and when one turns the other also turns quickly. The male appears to take the lead. Soon the rest appear, sailing out from the shore into sight. We hear a squeaking note as if made by a pump, and presently see four or five great herring gulls wheeling about. Sometimes they make a sound like the scream of a hen-hawk. They are shaped somewhat like a very thick white rolling-pin sharpened at both ends. At length they alight near the ducks. The sheldrakes at length acquire confidence, come close in shore, and go to preening themselves. . . .

They are all busy about it at once. . . . Among them, or near by, I at length detect three or four whistlers by their wanting the red bill, being considerably smaller and less white, having a white spot on the head, a black back, and altogether less white. They also keep more or less apart and do not dive when the rest do. . . . At length I detect two little dippers, as I have called them, though I am not sure that I have ever seen the male before. They are male and female. . . . They are incessantly diving close to the button bushes. The female is apparently uniformly black, or rather dark brown, but the male has a conspicuous crest. Apparently white on the hind head, with a white breast and white line on the lower sides of the neck; that is, the head and breast are black and white conspicuously.

The sheldrake has a peculiar long clipper look, often moving rapidly straight forward over the water. It sinks to very various depths, sometimes, as when apparently alarmed, showing only its head and neck and the upper part of its back, and at others, when at ease, floating buoyantly on the surface, as if it had taken in more air, showing all its white breast and the white along its sides. Sometimes it lifts itself up on the surface and flaps its wings, revealing its whole rosaceous breast and its

lower parts, looking in form like a penguin. . . . It was a pretty sight to see a pair of them tacking about, always within a foot or two of each other, heading the same way, now on this short tack, now on that, the male taking the lead, sinking deep and looking every way. When the whole twelve had come together they would soon break up again, and were continually changing their ground, though not diving, now sailing slowly this way a dozen rods, and now that, and now coming in near the shore. Then they would all go to preening themselves, thrusting their bills into their backs, and keeping up such a brisk motion that you could not get a fair sight of one's head. From time to time you heard a slight titter, not of alarm, but perhaps a breeding note, for they were evidently selecting their mates. Then it was surprising to see how, briskly sailing off one side, they went to diving, as if they had suddenly come across a school of minnows. A whole company would disappear at once. . . . Now for nearly a minute there is not a feather to be seen, and then next minute you see a party of half a dozen there chasing one another and making the water fly far and wide.

March 27, 1859. . . . It is remarkable how modest and unobtrusive these early flowers are. The musquash and duck hunter or the farmer

might, and do, commonly pass by them without perceiving them. They steal into the air and light of spring without being noticed for the most part. The sportsman seems to see a mass of weather-stained dead twigs, whose wood is exposed here and there, but, nearer, the spots are recognized for the pretty bright buttons of the willow; and the flowers of the alder (now partly in bloom) look like masses of bare, barren twigs, last year's twigs, and would be taken for such.

March 28, 1842. How often must one feel, as he looks back on his past life, that he has gained a talent, but lost a character. My life has got down into my fingers. My inspiration at length is only so much breath as I can breathe. Society affects to estimate men by their talents, but really feels and knows them by their character. What a man does, compared with what he is, is but a small part. To require that our friend possess a certain skill is not to be satisfied till he is something less than our friend. Friendship should be a great promise, a perennial springtime. I can conceive how the life of the gods may be dull and tame, if it is not disappointed and insatiate. One may well feel chagrined when he finds he can do nearly all he can conceive. How poor is the life of the best and wisest; the petty side

will appear at last. Understand once how the best in society live, with what routine, with what tedium and insipidity, with what grimness and defiance, with what chuckling over an exaggeration of the sunshine! I am astonished, I must confess, that man looks so respectable in nature, that, considering the littlenesses Socrates must descend to in the twenty-four hours, he yet wears a serene countenance and even adorns nature.

March 28, 1852. 10 $\frac{1}{4}$ P. M. The geese have just gone over, making a great cackling and awaking people in their beds. They will probably settle in the river.

March 28, 1853. — asked me to read the Life of Dr. Chalmers, which, however, I did not promise to do. Yesterday, Sunday, she was heard, through the partition, shouting to —, who is deaf, "Think of it, he stood half an hour to-day to hear the frogs croak, and he would n't read the Life of Chalmers!"

6 A. M. To Cliffs. . . . The woods ring with the cheerful jingle of the *Fringilla hie-malis*. This is a very trig and compact little bird, and appears to be in good condition. The straight edge of slate on their breasts contrasts remarkably with the white from beneath. The short, light-colored bill is also very conspicuous amid the dark slate, and when they fly

from you, the two white feathers in their tails are very distinct at a good distance. They are very lively, pursuing each other from bush to bush.

P. M. To Assabet. Saw eleven black ducks near the bathing-place in the Assabet, flying up stream. Came within three or four rods of me, then wheeled and went down. Their faint *quack* sounded much like the croak of the frogs occasionally heard now in the pools. As they wheeled and went off they made a very fine whistling sound, which yet, I think, was not made by their wings.

I saw flying to the alders by the river what I have no doubt was the tree-sparrow, with a ferruginous crown or head, and wings also partly ferruginous; light beneath. It was in company with a few of the *Fringilla hiemalis*. Sang sweetly, much like some notes of the canary. One pursued another. It was not large enough for the fox-colored sparrow. Perhaps I have seen it before within the month.

As near as I can make out, the hawks or falcons I am likely to see here are the American Sparrow Hawk, the Fish Hawk, the Goshawk, the Short-winged Buzzard (if this is the same with Browne's stuffed sharp-shinned or slate-colored hawk, not slate in his specimen). Is not this the common small hawk that soars?

The Red-tailed Hawk. (Have we the red-shouldered hawk, about the same size and aspect with the last?) The Hen Harrier. I suppose it is the adult of this, with the slate color, over meadows.

March 28, 1855. P. M. To Cliffs, along river. . . . I run about these cold, blustering days, on the whole, perhaps, the worst to bear in the year (partly because they disappoint expectation), looking almost in vain for some animal or vegetable life stirring. The warmest springs hardly allow me the glimpse of a frog's heel as he settles himself in the mud, and I think I am lucky if I see one winter-defying hawk or a hardy duck or two at a distance on the water. As for the singing of birds, the few that have come to us, it is too cold for them to sing and for me to hear. The bluebird's warble comes feeble and frozen to my ear. . . .

Over a great many acres the meadows have been cut up into neat squares and other figures by the ice of February, as if ready to be removed; sometimes separated by narrow and deep channels like muskrat paths, but oftener the edges have been raised and apparently stretched, and settling have not fallen into their places exactly, but lodged on their neighbors. Even yet you see cakes of ice surmounted by a shell of meadow-crust which has preserved them, while all around is bare meadow.

March 28, 1856. I think to say to my friend, There is but *one* interval between us. You are on one side of it, I on the other. You know as much about it as I, how wide, how impassable it is. I will endeavor not to blame you. Do not blame me. There is nothing to be said about it. Recognize the truth, and pass over the intervals that are bridged.

Farewell, my friends, my path inclines to this side the mountains, yours to that. For a long time you have appeared further and further off to me. I see that you will at length disappear altogether. For a season my path seems lonely without you. The meadows are like barren ground. The memory of me is steadily passing away from you. My path grows narrower and steeper, and the night is approaching. Yet I have faith that in the infinite future new suns will rise and new plains expand before me, and I trust I shall therein encounter pilgrims who bear that same virtue that I recognized in you, who will be that very virtue that was you. I accept the everlasting and salutary law which was promulgated as much that spring when I first knew you, as this when I seem to leave you.

My former friends, I visit you as one walks amid the columns of a ruined temple; you belong to an era, a civilization and glory, long

past. I recognize still your fair proportions, notwithstanding the convulsions we have felt, and the weeds and jackals that have sprung up around. I come here to be reminded of the past, to read your inscriptions, the hieroglyphics, the sacred writings. We are no longer the representatives of our former selves.

Love is a thirst that is never slaked. Under the coarsest rind the sweetest meat. If you would read a friend aright you must be able to read through something thicker and opaquer than horn. If you can read a friend, all languages will be easy to you. Enemies publish themselves. They declare war. The friend never declares his love.

March 28, 1857. At Lee's Cliff and this side, I see half a dozen buff-edged butterflies, *Vanessa antiopa*, and pick up three dead or dying, — two together, the edges of their wings gone. Several are fluttering over the dry rock *débris* under the cliff, in whose crevices probably they have wintered. Two of the three I pick up are not dead, though they will not fly. Verily their day is a short one. What has checked their frail life? Within, the buff edge is black with bright sky-blue spots. Those little oblong spots on the black ground are light as you look directly down on them, but from one side they change through violet to a cys-

talline rose purple. . . . The broad buff edge of the *Vanessa antiopa*'s wings harmonizes with the russet ground it flutters over, and as it stands concealed in the winter with its wings folded above its back, in a cleft in the rocks, the gray-brown underside of its wings prevents its being distinguished from the rocks themselves.

When I witness the first ploughing and planting I acquire a long-lost confidence in the earth, that it will nourish the seed that is committed to its bosom. I am surprised to be reminded that there is warmth in it. We have not only warmer skies then, but a warmer earth. The frost is out of it and we may safely commit these seeds to it in some places.

Yesterday I walked with a farmer beside his team and saw one furrow turned quite round his field. What noble work is ploughing, with the broad and solid earth for material, the ox for fellow-laborer, and the simple but efficient plough for tool. Work that is not done in any shop, in a cramped position, work that tells, that concerns all men, which the sun shines and the rain falls on, and the birds sing over. You turn over the whole vegetable mould, expose how many grubs, and put a new aspect on the face of the earth. It comes pretty near to making a world; redeeming a swamp does, at

any rate. A good ploughman is a *terræ filius*. A ploughman, we all know, whistles as he drives his team afield.

Often I can give the truest and most interesting account of any adventure I have had after years have elapsed, for then I am not confused, only the most significant facts surviving in my memory. Indeed, all that continues to interest me after such a lapse of time is sure to be pertinent, and I may safely record all that I remember.

March 28, 1858. I notice the hazel stigmas in a warm hollow just beginning to peep forth. This is an unobserved, but very pretty and interesting evidence of the progress of the season. I should not have noticed it, if I had not carefully examined the fertile buds. It is like a crimson star first dimly detected in the twilight. The warmth of the day in this sunny hollow above the withered sedge has caused the stigmas to show their lips through the scaly shield. They do not project more than the thirtieth of an inch. Some not the sixtieth. The staminate catkins are also considerably loosened. Just as the turtles put forth their heads, so these put forth their stigmas in the spring. How many accurate thermometers there are on every hill and in every valley! Measure the length of the hazel stigmas and you can tell

how much warmth there has been this spring. How fitly and exactly any season of the year may be described by indicating the condition of some flower.

It is surprising that men can be divided into those who lead an indoor and those who lead an outdoor life, as if birds and quadrupeds were to be divided into those that lived a within-nest or burrow life, and those that lived without their nests and holes chiefly. How many of our troubles are house-bred! He lives an outdoor life, *i. e.*, he is not squatted behind a door. It is such a questionable phrase as an "honest man," or the "naked eye," as if the eye which is not covered with a spy-glass should properly be called naked.

March 28, 1859. P. M. Paddle to the Bedford line. It is now high time to look for arrowheads, etc. I spend many hours every spring gathering the crop which the melting snow and rain have washed bare. When at length some island in the meadow or some sandy field elsewhere has been ploughed, perhaps for rye, in the fall, I take note of it, and do not fail to repair thither as soon as the earth begins to be dry in the spring. If the spot chances never to have been cultivated before, I am the first to gather a crop from it. The farmer little thinks that another reaps a har-

vest which is the fruit of his toil. As much ground is turned up in a day by the plough as Indian implements could not have turned over in a month, and my eyes rest on the evidences of an *aboriginal* life which passed here a thousand years ago, perchance. Especially if the knolls in the meadows are washed by a freshet where they have been ploughed the previous fall, the soil will be taken away lower down and the stones left, the arrowheads, etc., and soapstone pottery amid them, somewhat as gold is washed in a dish or tom. I landed on two spots this P. M. and picked up a dozen arrowheads. It is one of the regular pursuits of the spring. As sportsmen go in pursuit of duck and musquash, and scholars of rare books, and travelers of adventures, and poets of ideas, and all men of money, I go in search of arrowheads when the season comes round again. So I help myself to live worthily, loving my life as I should. It is a good collyrium to look on the bare earth, to pore over it so much, getting strength to all your senses, like Antæus. You can hardly name a more innocent or wholesome entertainment. As I am thus engaged I hear the rumble of the bowling-alley's thunder, which has begun again in the village. It comes before the earliest natural thunder. But what its lightning is, and what atmospheres it purifies,

I do not know. . . . I have not decided whether I had better publish my experience in searching for arrowheads in three volumes with plates, or try to compress it into one. These durable implements seem to have been suggested to the Indian mechanic with a view to my entertainment in a succeeding period. After all the labor expended on it, the bolt may have been shot but once, perchance, and the shaft, once attached to it, decayed, and there lay the arrowhead, sinking into the ground, awaiting me. They lie all over the hills with like expectation, and in due time the husbandman is sent, and, tempted by the promise of corn or rye, he ploughs the land and turns them up to my view. Many as I have found, methinks the last one gave me about the same delight that the first did. Some time or other, you would say, it had rained arrowheads, for they lie all over the surface of America. You may have your peculiar tastes; certain localities in your town may seem from association unattractive and uninhabitable to you; you may wonder that the land bears any money value there, and pity some poor fellow who is said to survive in that neighborhood; but plough up a new field there, and you will find the omnipresent arrow point strewn over it, and it will appear that the red man with other tastes and associations lived

there too. No matter how far from the modern road or meeting-house, no matter how near. They lie in the meeting-house cellar, and they lie in the distant cow-pasture. Some collections which were made a century ago by the curious like myself have been dispersed again, and they are still as good as new. You cannot tell the third-hand ones (for they are all second-hand) from the others, such is their persistent out-of-doors durability. They were chiefly made to be lost. They are sown like a grain that is slow to germinate, broadcast over the earth. As the dragon's teeth bore a crop of soldiers, so these bear crops of philosophers and poets, and the same seed is just as good to plant again. It is a stone fruit. Each one yields me a thought. I come nearer to the maker of it than if I found his bones. They would not prove any wit that wielded them, such as this work of his bones does. It is humanity inscribed on the face of the earth, patent to my eyes as soon as the snow is off, not hidden away in some crypt or grave, or under a pyramid. No disgusting mummy, but a clean stone, the best symbol or letter that could have been transmitted to me. The red man, his mark!



At every step I see it. . . . It is no single inscription on a particular rock, but a footprint or rather a mindprint

left everywhere and altogether illegible. No Vandals, however vandalic in their disposition, can be so industrious as to destroy them. . . . They are not fossil bones, but, as it were, fossil thoughts, forever reminding me of the mind that shaped them. I would fain know that I am treading in the tracks of human game, that I am on the trail of mind. . . . When I see these signs I know that the subtle spirits that made them are not far off, into whatever form transmuted. What if you do plough and hoe amid them, and swear that not one stone shall be left upon another, they are only the less likely to break in that case. When you turn up one layer you bury another so much the more securely. They are at peace with rust. This arrowheaded character promises to outlast all others. The larger pestles and axes may perchance be broken and grow scarce, but the arrowhead shall perhaps never cease to wing its way through the ages to eternity. . . . When some Vandal chieftain has razed to earth the British Museum, and perchance the winged bulls of Nineveh shall have lost most, if not all, of their features, the arrowheads which the museum contains may find themselves at home again in familiar dust, and resume their shining in new springs upon the bared surface of the earth, to be picked up for the thousandth time

by the shepherd or savage that may be wandering there, and once more suggest their story to him. . . . They cannot be said to be lost or found. Surely their use was not so much to bear its fate to some bird or quadruped, or man, as it was to lie here near the surface of the earth for a perpetual reminder to the generations that come after. — As for museums, I think it is better to let nature take care of our antiquities. These are our antiquities, and they are cleaner to think of than the rubbish of the Tower of London, and they are a more ancient armor than is there. It is a recommendation that they are so inobvious that they occur only to the eye and thought that chances to be directed toward them.

When you pick up an arrowhead and put it in your pocket, it may say, "Eh, you think you have got me, do you? But I shall wear a hole in your pocket at last, or if you put me in your cabinet, your heir or great-grandson will forget me, or throw me out of the window directly, or when the house falls I shall drop into the cellar, and then I shall be quite at home again, ready to be found again. Perhaps some new red man, that is to come, will fit me to a shaft and make me do his bidding for a bow shot; what reck I?"

The meadows, which are still covered far

and wide, are quite alive with black ducks. When walking about on the low eastern shore at the Bedford bound, I heard a faint honk, and looked around near the water with my glass, thinking it came from that side or perhaps from a farm-yard in that direction. I soon heard it again, and at last we detected a great flock of geese passing over quite on the other side of us and pretty high up. From time to time one of the company uttered a short note, — that peculiarly metallic, clangorous sound. They were in a single undulating line, and, as usual, one or two were from time to time crowded out of the line, apparently by the crowding of those in the rear, and were flying on one side and trying to recover their places. But at last a second short line was formed, meeting the long one at the usual angle, and making a figure somewhat like a hay-hook. I suspect it will be found there is really some advantage in large birds of passage flying in the wedge form and cleaving their way through the air, — that they really do overcome its resistance best in this way, and perchance the direction and strength of the wind determine the comparative length of the two sides. The great gulls fly generally up and down the river valley, cutting off the bends of the river, and so do these geese. They fly sympathizing with

the river, a stream in the air, soon lost in the distant sky. If you scan the horizon at this season you are very likely to detect a flock of dark ducks moving with rapid wing athwart the sky, or see the undulating line of migrating geese.

Ball's Hill, with its withered oak leaves and its pines, looks very fair to-day, a mile and a half off across the water, through a very thin varnish or haze. It reminds me of the isle which was called up from the bottom of the sea and given to Apollo. How charming the contrast of land and water, especially where there is a temporary island in the flood with its new and tender shores of waving outline, so withdrawn, yet habitable; above all, if it rises into a hill high above the water, so contrasting with it the more, and, if that hill is wooded, suggesting wildness. Our vernal lakes have a beauty to my mind which they would not possess if they were more permanent. Everything is in rapid flux here, suggesting that nature is alive to her extremities and superficialities. To-day we sail swiftly on dark rolling waves, or paddle over a sea as smooth as a mirror, unable to touch the bottom where mowers work and hide their jugs in August, coasting the edge of maple swamps where alder tassels and white-maple flowers are kissing the tide that has risen to

meet them. But this particular phase of beauty is fleeting. Nature has so many shows for us, she cannot afford to give much time to this. In a few days, perchance, these lakes will all have run away to the sea. Such are the pictures which she paints. When we look at our masterpieces we see only dead paint and its vehicle, which suggests no liquid life rapidly flowing off from beneath. But in nature it is constant surprise and novelty. . . . As we sweep past the north end of Poplar Hill, its now dryish, pale brown, mottled sward, clothing its rounded slope which was lately saturated with moisture, presents very agreeable hues. In this light, in fair weather, the patches of now dull greenish masses contrast just regularly enough with the pale brown grass. It is like some rich but modest-colored Kidderminster carpet, or rather the skin of a monster python tacked to the hillside and stuffed with earth. . . . The earth lies out now like a leopard drying her lichen and moss spotted skin in the sun, her sleek and variegated hide. I know that the few raw spots will heal over. Brown is the color for me, the color of our coats and our daily lives, the color of the poor man's loaf. The bright tints are pies and cakes, good only for October feasts, which would make us sick if eaten every day. . . .

Undoubtedly the geese fly more numerously over rivers which, like ours, flow northeasterly; are more at home with the water under them. Each flock runs the gauntlet of a thousand gunners; and when you see them steer off from you and your boat, you may remember how great their experience in such matters may be, how many such boats and gunners they have seen and avoided between here and Mexico. Even now (though you, low plodding, little dream it) they may perhaps see one or two more lying in wait ahead. They have an experienced ranger of the air for their guide. The echo of one gun hardly dies away, before they see another pointed at them. How many bullets or smaller shot have sped in vain toward their ranks!

Ducks fly more irregularly, and shorter distances at a time. The geese rest in fair weather by day only in the midst of our broadest meadows and ponds. So they go anxious and earnest to hide their nests under the pole. The gulls, more used to boats and sails, will often fly quite near without manifesting alarm.

March 29 and 30, 1842. Though nature's laws are more immutable than any despot's, they rarely seem rigid, but relax with license in summer weather. We are not often nor harshly reminded of the things we may not do. I am often astonished to see how long and with what

manifest infringement of the natural laws some men I meet in the highway maintain life. Nature does not deny them quarter. They do not die without priest. All the while she rejoices, for if they are not one part of her, they are another.

I am convinced that consistency is the secret of health. How many a poor man, striving to live a pure life, pines and dies after a life of sickness, and his successors doubt if nature is not pitiless; while the confirmed and consistent sot, who is content with his rank life like mushrooms, a mass of corruption, still dozes comfortably under a hedge. He has made his peace with himself; there is no strife. Nature is really very kind and liberal to all persons of vicious habits. They take great licenses with her. She does not exhaust them with many excesses.

How hard it is to be greatly related to mankind. They are only our uncles and aunts and cousins. I hear of some persons greatly related, but only he is so who has all mankind for his friend. Our intercourse with the best grows soon shallow and trivial. They no longer inspire us. After enthusiasm comes insipidity. The sap of all noble schemes drieth up, and the schemers return again and again in despair to "common sense and labor." If I could help

infuse some life and heart into society, should I not do a service? Why will not the gods mix a little of the wine of nobleness with the air we drink? let virtue have some firm foothold in the earth? Where does she dwell? Who are the salt of the earth? May not Love have some resting-place on the earth as sure as the sunshine on the rock? The crystals imbedded in the cliffs sparkle and gleam from afar, as if they did certainly enrich our planet, but where does any virtue permanently sparkle and gleam? She was sent forth over the earth too soon, before the earth was prepared for her. Rightfully we are to each other the gate of heaven and redeemers from sin, but how we overlook these lowly and narrow ways. We will go over the bald mountain-tops without going through the valleys. Men do not, after all, meet on the ground of their real acquaintance and actual understanding of one another, but degrade themselves immediately into the puppets of convention. They do as if, in given circumstances, they had agreed to know each other only so well. They rarely get so far as to inform one another gratuitously, and use each other like the sea and the woods for what is new and inspiring there. The best intercourse and communion they have is a silence above and behind their speech. We should be very sim-

ple to rely on words. What we knew before always interprets a man's words. I cannot easily remember what any man has said to me, but how can I forget what he is to me? We know each other better than we are aware. We are admitted to startling privacies with every person we meet.

March 29, 1853. . . . P. M. To the early willow behind Martial Miles's. . . . On the railroad I hear the telegraph. This is the lyre that is as old as the world. I put my ear to the post and the sound seems to be in its core directly against my ear. This is all of music. The utmost refinements of art, I think, can go no further. . . .

Walking along near the edge of the meadow under Lupine Hill, I slumped through the sod into a muskrat's nest, for there was only a thickness of two inches over it, which was enough when it was frozen. I laid it open with my hands. There were three or four channels or hollowed paths a rod or more in length, not merely worn but made in the meadow, centring at the mouth of this burrow. They were three or four inches deep, and finally became indistinct, and were lost amid the cranberry vines and grass toward the river. The entrance to the burrow was just at the edge of the upland, here a gentle sloping bank, and was probably

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just beneath the surface of the water six weeks ago. It was about twenty-five rods distant from the true bank of the river. From this a straight gallery about six inches in diameter every way sloped upward about eight feet into the bank just beneath the turf, so that the end was about a foot higher than the entrance. Here was a somewhat circular enlargement about one foot in horizontal diameter and of the same depth as the gallery. In it was nearly a peck of coarse meadow stubble, showing the marks of the scythe, with which was mixed accidentally a very little of the moss that grew with it. Three short galleries, only two feet long, were continued from this centre, somewhat like rays, toward the high land, as if they had been prepared in order to be ready for a sudden rise of the water, or had been actually made so far under such an emergency. The nest was of course thoroughly wet, and, humanly speaking, uncomfortable, though the creature could breathe in it. But it is plain that the muskrat cannot be subject to the toothache. I have no doubt this was made and used last winter, for the grass was as fresh as that in the meadow (except that it was pulled up), and the sand which had been taken out lay partly in a flattened heap in the meadow, and no grass had sprung up through it. In the course of the

above examination I made a very interesting discovery. When I turned up the thin sod from over the damp cavity of the nest, I was surprised to see at this hour of a pleasant day what I took to be beautiful frost crystals of a rare form, frost bodkins I was in haste to name them, for around the fine white roots of the grass, apparently herd's-grass, which were from one to two or more inches long, reaching downward into the dark, damp cavern (though the grass blades had scarcely made so much growth above; indeed the growth was scarcely visible there), appeared to be lingering still into the middle of this warm afternoon rare and beautiful frost crystals exactly in the form of a bodkin, about one sixth of an inch wide at base, and tapering evenly to the lower end. Sometimes the upper part of the core was naked for half an inch, which gave them a slight resemblance to feathers, though they were not flat, but round. At the abrupt end of the rootlet (as if cut off) was a larger clear drop. On examining them more closely, feeling and tasting them, I found that it was not frost, but a clear crystalline dew in almost invisible drops, concentrated from the dampness of the cavern, perhaps melted frost, preserving by its fineness its original color, thus regularly arranged around the delicate white fibre. Looking again, in-

credulous, I discerned extremely minute white threads or gossamer standing out on all sides from the main rootlet and affording the core for these drops. Yet on those fibres which had lost their dew, none of these minute threads appeared. . . . It impressed me as a wonderful piece of chemistry, that the very grass we trample on and esteem so cheap should be thus wonderfully nourished, that this spring greenness was not produced by coarse and cheap means, but that in the sod, out of sight, the most delicate and magical processes are going on. The half is not shown. . . . I brought home some tufts of the grass in my pocket, but when I took it out, I could not at first find those pearly white fibres and thought they were lost, for they were shrunk to dry brown threads, and as for the still finer gossamer which supported the roscid droplets, with few exceptions they were absolutely undiscoverable. They no longer stood out around the core, so delicate was their organization. It made me doubt almost if there were not actual, substantial, though invisible cores to the leaflets and veins of the hoar frost. Can these almost invisible and tender fibres penetrate the earth where there is no cavern? Or is what we call the solid earth porous and cavernous enough for them?

March 29, 1855. As I stand on Heywood's

Peak looking over Walden, more than half its surface already sparkling blue water, I inhale with pleasure the cold but wholesome air, like a draught of cold water, contrasting it in my memory with the wind of summer, which I do not thus eagerly swallow. This, which is a chilling wind to my fellow, is decidedly refreshing to me. I swallow it with eagerness as a panacea. I feel an impulse also already to jump into the half-melted pond. This cold wind is refreshing to my palate as the warm air of sunshine is not, methinks.

March 29, 1858. . . . P. M. To Ball's Hill. . . . As I sit two thirds up the sunny side of Pine Hill, looking over the meadows, now almost completely bare, the crows, by their swift flight and scolding, reveal to me some large bird of prey hovering over the river. I perceive by its marking and size that it cannot be a hen-hawk, and now it settles on the topmost branch of a white maple, bending it down. Its great armed and feathered legs dangle helplessly in the air for a moment, as if feeling for the perch, while its body is tipping this way and that. It sits there facing me some forty or fifty rods off, pluming itself, but keeping a good lookout. At this distance and in this light it appears to have a rusty-brown head and breast, and is white beneath, with rusty leg feathers

and a tail black beneath. When it flies again, it is principally black varied with white, regular light spots on its tail and wings beneath, but chiefly a conspicuous white space on the forward part of the neck. Also some of the upper side of the tail or tail-coverts is white. It has broad, ragged, buzzard-like wings. I think it must be an eagle (?). It lets itself down, with its legs somewhat helplessly dangling, as if feeling for something on the bare meadow, and then gradually flies away, soaring and circling higher and higher until lost in the downy clouds. This lofty soaring is at least a grand recreation, as if it were nourishing sublime ideas. I should like to know why it soars higher and higher so, whether its thoughts are really turned to earth, for it seems to be more nobly as well as highly employed than the laborers ditching in the meadows beneath, or any others of my fellow-townsmen.

With many men their fine manners are a lie all over, a skin coat or finish of falsehood. They are not brave enough to do without this sort of armor, which they wear night and day.

March 30, 1840. Pray, what things interest me at present? A long soaking rain, the drops trickling down the stubble, while I lay drenched on a last year's bed of wild oats by the side of some bare hill, ruminating. These things are

of moment. To watch this crystal globe just sent from heaven to associate with me. While these clouds and this sombre drizzling weather shut all in, we two draw nearer and know one another. The gathering in of the clouds with the last rush and dying breath of the wind, and then the regular dripping of twigs and leaves the country over, give the impression of inward comfort and sociableness. The drenched stubble and trees that drop beads on you as you pass, their dim outline seen through the rain on all sides, drooping in sympathy with yourself, these are my undisputed territory, this is nature's English comfort. The birds draw closer and are more familiar under the thick foliage, composing new strains on their roosts against the sunshine.


March 30, 1841. I find my life growing slovenly when it does not exercise a constant supervision over itself. Its duds accumulate. Next to having lived a day well, is a clear and calm overlooking of all our days.


FRIENDSHIP.

Now we are partners in such legal trade,
We 'll look to the beginnings, not the ends,
Nor to pay-day, knowing true wealth is made
For current stock, and not for dividends.

March 30, 1853. Ah, those youthful days, are they never to return? when the walker does

not too enviously observe particulars, but sees, hears, scents, tastes, and feels only himself, the phenomena that showed themselves in him, his expanding body, his intellect and heart. No worm or insect, quadruped or bird, confined his view, but the unbounded universe was his. A bird has now become a mote in his eye.

Dug into what I take to be a woodchuck's burrow in the low knoll below the cliffs. It was in the side of the hill, and sloped gently downward, at first diagonally into the hill about five feet, perhaps westerly, then turned and ran north about three feet, then northwest further into the hill four feet, then north again four feet, then northeast I know not how far, the last five feet, perhaps, ascending. It was the full length of the shovel from the surface of the ground to the bottom of the hole when I left off, owing, perhaps, to the rise of the hill. The hole was arched above and flat on the bottom like an oven,  about five inches in diameter at the base. It seemed to have a pretty hard crust as I probed into it. There was a little enlargement, perhaps ten inches in diameter, in the angle at the end of twelve feet. It was thus,

 It was a wonder where the sand was conveyed to, for there was not a wheel-

barrow load at the entrance.

March 30, 1854. . . . Read an interesting article on Etienne Geoffroy St. Hilaire, the friend and contemporary of Cuvier, though opposed to him in his philosophy. He believed species to be variable. In looking for anatomical resemblances he found that he could not safely be guided by function, form, structure, size, color, etc., but only by the relative position and mutual dependence of organs. Hence his "Le Principe des Connexions," and his maxim, "An organ is sooner destroyed than transposed," — "Un organ est plutôt altéré, atrophié, anéanti, que transposé." A principal formula of his was, "Unity of Plan, Unity of Composition." ("Westminster Review," January, 1854.)

March 30, 1855. . . . He must have a great deal of life in him to draw upon, who can pick up a subsistence in November and March. Man comes out of his winter quarters this month as lean as a woodchuck. Not till late could the skunk find a place where the ground was thawed on the surface. Except for science do not travel in such a climate as this in November and March. I tried if a fish would take the bait to-day, but in vain; I did not get a nibble. Where are they?

March 30, 1856. P. M. To Walden and Fair Haven. Still cold and blustering. I

came out to see the sand and subsoil in the deep cut as I would to see a spring flower, some redness in the cheek of earth. . . . I go to Fair Haven *via* the Andromeda Swamps. The river is a foot and more in depth there still. There is a little bare ground in and next to the swampy woods at the head of Well Meadow, where the springs and little black rills are flowing. I see already one blade, three or four inches long, of that purple or lake grass, lying flat on some water between snow-clad banks, the first leaf with a rich bloom on it. How silent are the footsteps of spring! There, too, where there is a fraction of the meadow, two rods over, quite bare under the bank, in this warm recess at the head of the meadow, though the rest is covered with snow a foot or more in depth, I was surprised to see the skunk-cabbage, with its great spear-heads, open and ready to blossom, and the *Caltha palustris* bud, which shows yellowish, and the golden saxifrage green and abundant, all surrounded and hemmed in by snow which has covered the ground since Christmas, and stretches as far as you can see on every side. The spring advances in spite of snow and ice and cold even. The ground under the snow has long since felt the influence of the spring sun whose rays fell at a more favorable angle. The tufts or tussocks next the edge of

the snow were crowned with dense phalanxes of spears of the stiff, triangularish sedge-grass five inches high, but quite yellow, with a very slight greenness at the tip, showing that they pushed up through the snow, and, though it had melted, had not yet acquired color. In warm recesses in meadows and clefts, in rocks in the midst of ice and snow, nay, even under the snow, vegetation commences and steadily advances.

March 30, 1858. P. M. To my boat at Cardinal Shore and thence to Lee's Cliff. . . . Landing at Bittern Cliff I went round through the woods to get sight of ducks on the pond. Creeping down through the woods I reached the rocks, and saw fifteen or twenty sheldrakes scattered about. The full-plumaged males, conspicuously black and white, and often swimming in pairs, appeared to be the most wary, keeping farthest out. Others, with much less white, and duller black, were very busily fishing just north of the inlet of the pond, where there is about three feet of water, and others still playing and preening themselves. These ducks, whose tame representatives are so sluggish and deliberate in their motions, were full of activity. A party of them fishing and playing is a very lively scene. On one side, for instance, you will see eight or ten busily diving and most of the time under water, not rising

high when they come up, and soon plunging again. The whole surface will be in commotion, though no ducks are to be seen. I saw one come up with a large fish, whereupon all the rest, as they successively came to the surface, gave chase to it, while it held its prey over the water in its bill. They pursued it with a great rush and clatter a dozen or more rods over the surface, making a great furrow in the water, but there being some trees in the way I could not see the issue. I saw seven or eight all dive together, as with one consent, remaining under half a minute or more. On another side you see a party which seem to be playing and pluming themselves. They will swim rapidly and dive, and come up and dive again every three or four feet, occasionally one pursuing another, will flutter in the water, making it fly, or erect themselves at full length on the surface like a penguin, and flap their wings. This party make an incessant noise. Again, you will see some steadily tacking this way or that in the middle of the pond, and often they rest there asleep with their heads in their backs. They readily cross the pond, swimming from this side to that.

March 30, 1859. 6 A. M. To Hill (across water). Hear a red squirrel chirrup at me by the hemlocks. It is all for my benefit, not that

he is excited by fear, I think, but so full is he of animal spirits that he makes a great ado about the least event. At first he scratches on the bark very rapidly with his hind feet, without moving the fore feet. He makes so many queer sounds, and so different from one another, that you would think they came from half a dozen creatures. I hear now two sounds from him of a very distinct character, a low or base inward, worming, screwing kind of sound (very like that, by the way, which an anxious partridge mother makes), and at the same time a very sharp and shrill bark, clear, and on a very high key, totally distinct from the last, while his tail is flashing incessantly. You might say that he successfully accomplished the difficult feat of singing and whistling at the same time.

P. M. To Walden *via* Hubbard's Close. . . . See on Walden two sheldrakes, male and female (as is common), so they have for some time paired. They are a hundred rods off, the male, the larger, with his black head and white breast; the female with a red head. With my glass I see the long red bills of both. They swim, at first one way near together, then tack and swim the other, looking around incessantly, never quite at their ease, wary and watchful for foes. A man cannot walk down to the shore,

or stand out on a hill overlooking the pond, without disturbing them. They will have an eye upon him. The locomotive whistle makes every wild duck start that is floating within the limits of the town. I see that these ducks are not here for protection alone, for at last they both dive and remain beneath about forty pulse-beats, and again and again. I think they are looking for fishes. Perhaps, therefore, these divers are more likely to alight in Walden than the black ducks are. Hear the hovering note of a snipe.

March 31, 1842. I cannot forget the majesty of that bird at the Cliff. It was no sloop or smaller craft hove in sight, but a ship of the line, worthy to struggle with the elements. It was a great presence, as of the master of river and forest. His eye would not have quailed before the owner of the soil, none could challenge his rights. And then his retreat, sailing so steadily away, was a kind of advance. How is it that man always feels like an interloper in nature, as if he had intruded on the domains of bird and beast?

The really efficient laborer will be found not to crowd his day with work, but will saunter to his task surrounded by a wide halo of ease and leisure. There will be a wide margin for relaxation to his day. He is only earnest to secure

the kernels of time, and does not exaggerate the value of the husk. Why should the hen sit all day? She can lay but one egg; and besides, she will not have picked up materials for a new one. Those who work much do not work hard.

Nothing is so rare as sense. Very uncommon sense is poetry, and has a heroic or sweet music. But in verse, for the most part, the music now runs before and now behind the sense, is not coincident with it. Given the metre, and one will make music while another makes sense. But good verse, like a good soldier, will make its own music, and it will march to the same with one consent. In most verse there is no inherent music. The man should not march, but walk like a citizen. . . . Lydgate's "Story of Thebes," intended for a Canterbury tale, is a specimen of most unprogressive, unmusical verse. Each line rings the knell of its brother as if it were introduced but to dispose of him. No mortal man could have breathed to that cadence without long intervals of relaxation. The repetition would have been fatal to the lungs. No doubt there was much healthy exercise taken in the mean while. He should forget his rhyme and tell his story, or forget his story and breathe himself. In Shakespeare and elsewhere the climax may be somewhere along the line which runs as varied

and meandering as a country road; but in Lydgate it is nowhere but in the rhyme. The couplets slope headlong to their confluence.

March 31, 1852. Intended to get up early this morning and commence a series of spring walks, but clouds and drowsiness prevented. Early, however, I saw the clouds in the west, for my window looks that way, suffused with rosy light, but that flattery is all forgotten now. How can one help being an early riser and walker in that season when the birds begin to twitter and sing in the morning?

The expedition in search of Sir John Franklin, in 1850, landed at Cape Riley, on the north side of Lancaster Sound, and one vessel brought off relics of Franklin, *viz.*, "five pieces of beef, mutton, and pork bones, together with a bit of rope, a small rag of canvas, and a chip of wood cut by an axe." Richardson says: "From a careful examination of the beef bones, I came to the conclusion that they had belonged to pieces of salt beef ordinarily supplied to the navy, and that probably they and the other bones had been exposed to the atmosphere and friction in rivulets of melted snow for four or five summers. The rope was proved by the ropemaker who examined it to have been made at Chatham, of Hungarian hemp, subsequent to 1841. The fragment of canvas, which seemed

to have been part of a boat's swab, had the Queen's broad arrow painted on it, and the chip of wood was of ash, a tree which does not grow on the banks of any river that falls into the Arctic sea. It had, however, been long exposed to the weather, and was likely to have been cut from a piece of drift timber found lying on the spot, as the mark of an axe was recent compared to the surface of the wood, which might have been exposed to the weather for a century." "The grounds of these conclusions were fully stated in a report made to the Admiralty by Sir Edward Parry, myself, and other officers." Is not here an instance of the civilized man's detecting the traces of a friend or foe with a skill at least equal to that of the savage? Indeed it is in both cases but a common sense applied to the objects, and in a manner most familiar to both parties. The skill of the savage is just such a science, though referred sometimes to instinct.

Perchance, as we grow old, we cease to spring with the spring, we are indifferent to the succession of years, and they go by without epoch as months. Woe be to us when we cease to form new resolutions on the opening of a new year.

It would be worth while to tell why a swamp pleases us, why a certain kind of weather

pleases us, etc., analyze our impressions. Why does the moaning of the storm give me pleasure? Methinks because it puts to rout the trivialness of our fair-weather life, and gives it, at least, a tragic interest. The sound has the effect of a pleasing challenge to call forth our energy to resist the invaders of our life's territory. It is musical and thrilling as the sound of an enemy's bugle. Our spirits revive like lichens in a storm. There is something worth living for when we are resisted, threatened. As at the last day we might be thrilled with the prospect of the grandeur of our destiny, so in these first days our destiny appears grander. What would the days, what would our life, be worth, if some nights were not dark as pitch, of darkness tangible, that you can cut with a knife! How else could the light in the mind shine! How should we be conscious of the light of reason? If it were not for physical cold how should we have discovered the warmth of the affections. I sometimes feel that I need to sit in a far-away cave through a three weeks' storm, cold and wet, to give a tone to my system. The spring has its windy March to usher it in, with many soaking rains reaching into April.

Methinks I would share every creature's suffering for the sake of its experience and joy

The song-sparrow and the transient fox-colored sparrow, have they brought me no message this year? Is not the coming of the fox-colored sparrow something more earnest and significant than I have dreamed of? Have I heard what this tiny passenger has to say while it flits thus from tree to tree? Can I forgive myself if I let it go to Rupert's Land before I have appreciated it? God did not make this world in jest, no, nor in indifference. These migratory sparrows all bear messages that concern my life. I do not pluck the fruits in their season. I love the birds and beasts because they are mythologically in earnest. I see that the sparrow *cheeps*, and flits, and sings adequately to the great design of the universe; that man does not communicate with it, understand its language, because he is not at one with nature. I reproach myself because I have regarded with indifference the passage of the birds; I have thought them no better than I.

What philosopher can estimate the different values of a waking thought and a dream?

I hear late to-night the unspeakable rain mingled with rattling snow against the windows, preparing the ground for spring.

March 31, 1853. The robins sing at the very earliest dawn. I wake with their note ringing in my ear. 6 A. M. To Island by boat.

. . . 9 A. M. To Lincoln, surveying for Mr. Austin. The catkins of the hazel are now trembling in the wind and much lengthened, showing yellowish and beginning to shed pollen. Saw and heard sing in a peach orchard my *warbling vireo* of the morning. It must be the fox-colored sparrow. It is plumper than a bluebird, tail fox-colored, a distinct spot on the breast, no bars visible on wings; beginning with a clear, rich, deliberate note, jingling more rapidly, much like the warbling vireo, at the end. I afterwards heard a fine concert of little songsters along the edge of the meadow; approached and watched and listened for more than half an hour. There were many little sparrows, difficult to detect, flitting and hopping along, and scratching the ground like hens under the alders, willows, and cornels, in a wet, leafy place, occasionally alighting and preening themselves. They had bright bay crowns, two rather distinct white bars on wings, an ashy breast, and dark tail. These twittered sweetly, in some parts very much like a canary, and many together, making the fullest and sweetest concert I have heard yet. Like a shopful of canaries. About the size of a song-sparrow. I think these are the tree-sparrow. Also mixed with them, and puzzling me to distinguish for a long time, were many of the fox-colored (?)

sparrows mentioned above, with a creamy, cinnamon-tinged, ashy breast, cinnamon shoulder-let, and ashy about side-head and throat, with a fox-colored tail. A size larger than the others, the spot on breast very marked. Here were evidently two birds intimately mixed. Did not Peabody confound them when he mentioned the mark on the breast of the tree-sparrow? The rich strain of the fox-colored sparrow, as I think it, added much to the choir. The latter, solos, the former, in concert. I kept off a hawk by my presence. They were a long time invisible to me except when they flitted past. . . .

Mount Tabor. . . . It is affecting to see a distant mountain-top, like the summits of Uncannunuc, well seen from this hill, whereon you camped for a night in your youth, which you have never revisited, still as blue and ethereal to your eyes as is your memory of it. It lies like an isle in the far heavens, a part of earth unprofaned, which does not bear a price in the market, is not advertised by the real estate broker.

March 31, 1854. In criticising your writing, trust your finest instinct. There are many things which we come very near questioning, but do not question. When I have sent off my manuscripts to the printer, certain objectionable

sentences or expressions are sure to obtrude themselves on my attention with force, though I had not consciously suspected them before. My critical instinct then at once breaks the ice and comes to the surface.

March 31, 1855. I see through the window that it is a very fine day, the first really warm one. I did not know the whole till I came out at 3 P. M. and walked to the Cliffs. The slight haze of yesterday has become very thick, with a southwest wind, concealing the mountains. I can see it in the air within two or three rods as I look against the bushes. The fuzzy gnats are in the air, and bluebirds whose warble is thawed out; I am uncomfortably warm, gradually unbutton both my coats, and wish that I had left the outside one at home. I go listening for the croak of the first frog or peep of a hyledes. It is suddenly warm, and this amelioration of the weather is incomparably the most important fact in this vicinity. It is incredible what a revolution in our feelings and in the aspect of nature this warmer air alone has produced. Yesterday the earth was simple to barrenness, and dead, bound out. Out of doors there was nothing but the wind and the withered grass, and the cold though sparkling blue water, and you were driven in upon yourself. Now, you would think there was a sudden awak-

ening in the very crust of the earth, as if flowers were expanding and leaves putting forth; but not so. I listen in vain to hear a frog or a new bird as yet. Only the frozen ground is melting a little deeper, and the water is trickling from the hills in some places. No, the change is mainly in us. We feel as if we had obtained a new lease of life.

March 31, 1856. I see the scarlet tops of white maples nearly a mile off down the river, the lusty shoots of last year. Those of the red maple do not show thus. I see many little holes in the old and solid snow where leaves have sunk down gradually and perpendicularly eleven or twelve inches, the hole no larger at the top than at the bottom, nay, often partly closed at top by the drifting, and exactly the form and size of the leaf. It is as if the sun had driven this thin shield like a bullet thus deep into the solid snow.

March 31, 1857. A very pleasant day. Spent a part of it in the garden preparing to set out fruit trees. It is agreeable once more to put a spade into the warm mould. The victory is ours at last, for we remain and take possession of the field. In this climate, in which we do not commonly bury our dead in the winter on account of the frozen ground, and find ourselves exposed on a hard, bleak crust, the

coming out of the frost, and the first turning up of the soil with a spade or plough, is an event of importance.

P. M. To Hill. As I ascend the east side of the hill I hear the distant faint *peep* of the hylodes, and the *tut tut* of the croaking frogs from the west. How gradually and imperceptibly the peep of the hylodes mingles with and swells the volume of sound which makes the voice of awakening nature! If you do not listen carefully for its first note you probably will not hear it; and not having heard that, your ears become used to the sound, so that you will hardly notice it at last, however loud and universal. I hear it now faintly from through and over the bare gray twigs and the sheeny needles of an oak and pine wood, and from over the russet fields beyond. It is so intimately mingled with the murmur or roar of the wind as to be well-nigh inseparable from it. It leaves such a lasting trace on the ear's memory that often I think I hear the peeping when I do not. It is a singularly emphatic and ear-piercing proclamation of animal life, when, with a very few and slight exceptions, vegetation is yet dormant. The dry croaking and *tut tut* of the frogs (a sound which ducks seem to imitate, a kind of *quacking*, and they are both of the water) is plainly enough down there in some pool in the

woods. But the shrill peeping of the hylodes locates itself nowhere in particular. It seems to take its rise at an indefinite distance over wood and hill and pasture, from clefts or hollows, in the March wind. It is not so much of the earth, earthy, as of the air, airy. It rises at once on the wind and is at home there, and we are incapable of tracing it farther back. What an important part to us the little peeping hylodes acts, filling all our ears with sound in the spring afternoons and evenings, while the existence of the otter, our largest wild animal, is not betrayed to any of our senses, or at least not to more than one in a thousand.

An Irishman is digging a ditch for a foundation wall of a new shop where James Adams's shop stood. He tells me that he dug up three cannon balls just in the rear of the shop within a foot of each other and about eighteen inches beneath the surface. I saw one of them, which was about three and one half inches in diameter and somewhat eaten with rust on one side. These were probably thrown into the pond by the British on the 19th of April, 1775. Shattuck says that five hundred pounds of balls were thrown into the pond and wells. These may have been dropped out of the back window.

March 31, 1858. . . . I see about a dozen

black ducks on Flint's Pond, asleep with their heads on their backs and drifting across the pond before the wind. I suspect that they are nocturnal in their habits and therefore require much rest by day. So do the seasons revolve, and every chink is filled. While the waves toss, this bright day, the ducks asleep are drifting before the wind across the ponds. Every now and then one or two lift their heads and look about as if they watched by turns. . . . Just after sundown I see a large flock of wild geese in a perfect harrow cleaving their way toward the northeast, with Napoleonic tactics splitting the forces of winter.

March 31, 1860. . . . The small red butterfly in the woodpaths and sproutlands, and I hear at mid P. M. a very faint but positive ringing sound rising above the susurrus of the pines, of the breeze, which I think is the note of a distant and perhaps solitary toad, not loud and ringing as it will be. Toward night I hear it more distinctly and am more confident about it. I hear this faint first reptilian sound added to the sound of the winds thus, each year a little in advance of the unquestionable note of the toad. Of constant sounds in the warmer parts of warm days there now begins to be added to the rustling or washing water-fall-like sound of the wind this faintest imaginable prelude of

the toad. I often draw my companion's attention to it, and he fails to hear it at all, it is so slight a departure from the previous monotony of March. This morning you walked in the warm sproutland, the strong but warm southwest wind blowing, and you heard no sound but the dry and mechanical susurrus of the wood; now there is mingled with or added to it, to be detected only by the sharpest ears, this first and faintest imaginable voice. I heard this under Mount Misery. Probably the toads come forth earlier under the warm slopes of that hill. . . . At evening I hear the first real robin's song.

April 1, 1841.

ON THE SUN COMING OUT IN THE AFTERNOON.

Methinks all things have traveled since you shined,
But only Time and clouds, Time's team, have moved;
Again foul weather shall not change my mind,
But in the shade I will believe what in the sun I loved.

April 1, 1852. Walden is all white ice, but little melted about the shore. The very sight of it when I get so far on the causeway, though I hear the spring note of the chickadee from over the ice, carries my thoughts back at once some weeks toward winter, and a chill comes over them.

The mountains seen from Bare Hill are very fine now in the horizon, so evanescent, being broadly spotted white and blue like the skins of

some animals, the white predominating. The Peterboro' Hills to the north are almost all white. The snow has melted more on the more southern mountains. With their white mantles, notwithstanding the alternating dark patches, they melt into the sky. Yet perhaps the white portions may be distinguished by the peculiar light of the sun shining on them.

I hear a robin singing in the woods south of Hosmer's, just before sunset. It is a sound associated with New England village life. It brings to my thoughts summer evenings when the children are playing in the yards before the doors, and their parents, conversing, sit at the open windows. It foretells all this now, before those summer hours are come.

As I come over the turnpike, the song-sparrow's jingle comes up from every part of the meadow, as native as the tinkling rills or the blossoms of the spiræa. Its *cheep* is like the sound of opening buds.

April 1, 1853. The rain rests on the downy leaves of the young mulleins in separate, irregular drops, from the irregularity and color looking like ice. The drops quite in the cup of the mullein have a peculiar translucent silveriness, apparently because while they are upheld by the wool the light is reflected which would otherwise be absorbed, as if they were cased in light.

The fresh mullein leaves are pushing up amid the brown, unsightly wrecks of last fall, which strew the ground like old clothes. . . . That early willow by Miles's has been injured by the rain. The drops rest on the catkins as on the mullein. Though this began to open only day before yesterday, and was the earliest I could find, already I hear the well-known hum of a honey-bee, and one alights on it (also a fly or two), loads himself, circles round with a loud humming, and is off. Where the first willow catkin opens, there will be found the honey-bee also with it. He found this out as soon as I. The stamens have burst out on the side towards the top, like a sheaf of spears, thrust forth to encounter the sun, — so many spears as the garrison can spare, advanced into the summer. With this flower, so much more flower-like or noticeable than any yet, begins a new era in the flower season.

April 1, 1854. The tree-sparrows, *hiemalis*, and song-sparrows are particularly lively and musical in the yard this rainy and truly April day. The robin now begins to sing powerfully.

P. M. Up Assabet to Dodge's Brook; thence to Farmer's. April has begun like itself. It is warm and showery, while I sail away with a light southwest wind toward the rock. Sometimes the sun seems just ready to burst out, yet

I know it will not. The meadow is becoming bare. It resounds with the sprayey notes of blackbirds. The birds sing this warm and showery day after a fortnight's cold (yesterday was wet, too), with a universal burst and flood of melody. Great flocks of *hiemalis*, etc., pass overhead like schools of fishes in the water, many abreast. The white-maple stamens are beginning to peep out from the wet and weather-beaten buds. The earliest alders are just ready to bloom, to show their yellow on the first decidedly warm and sunny day. The water is smooth at last, and dark. Ice no longer forms on the oars. It is pleasant to paddle under the dripping hemlocks this dark day. They make more of a wilderness impression than pines. The *hiemalis* is in the largest flocks of any at this season. You see them come drifting over a rising ground, just like snow-flakes before a northeast wind.

April 1, 1855. When I look out the window, I see that the grass on the bank on the south side of the house is already much greener than it was yesterday. As it cannot have grown so suddenly, how shall I account for it? I suspect the reason is that the few green blades are not merely washed bright by the rain, but erect themselves to imbibe its influence, and so are more prominent, while the withered blades are beaten down and flattened by it.

April 1, 1858. I saw a squirrel's nest twenty-three or twenty-four feet high in a maple, and climbing to it (for it was so peculiar, having a basket-work of twigs about it, that I did not know but it was a hawk's nest) I found that it was a very perfect (probably) red squirrel's nest, made entirely of the now very dark or blackish green moss, such as grows on the button-bush and on the swampy ground, — a dense mass of it, about one foot through, watted together, with an inobvious hole on the east side. A tuft of loose moss blowing up about it seemed to answer for a door or porch-covering. The cavity within was quite small, but very snug and warm, where one or two squirrels might lie warm in the severest storm, the dense moss walls being three inches thick or more. But what was most peculiar was that the nest, though placed over the centre of the tree, where it divided into four or five branches, was regularly and elaborately hedged about and supported by a basket-work of strong twigs stretched across from bough to bough; which twigs I perceived had been gnawed green from the maple itself, the stub ends remaining visible all around. . . .

April 2, 1852. 6 A. M. To the river-side and Merrick's pasture. The sun is up. The water in the meadows is perfectly smooth and

placid, reflecting the hills and clouds and trees. The air is full of the notes of birds, song-sparrows, redwings, robins (singing a strain), blue-birds, and I hear also a lark, as if all the earth had burst forth into song. The influence of this April morning has reached them, for they live out-of-doors all the night, and there is no danger they will oversleep themselves such a morning. A few weeks ago, before the birds had come, there came to my mind in the night the twittering sound of birds in the early dawn of a spring morning, — a semi-prophecy of it, — and last night I attended mentally, as if I heard the spray-like dreaming sound of the mid-summer frog, and realized how glorious and full of revelations it was. The clouds are white, watery, not such as we had in the winter. I see in this fresh morning the shells left by the muskrats along the shore, and their galleries leading into the meadow, and the bright red cranberries washed up along the shore in the old water-mark. Suddenly there is a blur on the placid surface of the waters, a rippling mistiness, produced, as it were, by a slight morning breeze, and I should be sorry to show it to a stranger now. So is it with our minds.

How few valuable observations can we make in youth! What if there were united the susceptibility of youth with the discrimination of

age! Once I was part and parcel of nature; now I am observant of her.

It appears to me that to one standing on the heights of philosophy mankind and the works of man will have sunk out of sight altogether; that man is altogether too much insisted on. The poet says the proper study of mankind is man. I say, study to forget all that; take wider views of the universe. That is the egotism of the race. What is this our childish, gossiping, social literature, mainly in the hands of the publishers? Another poet says, "The world is too much with us." He means, of course, that man is too much with us. In the promulgated views of man in institutions, in the common sense, there is narrowness and delusion. It is our weakness that so exaggerates the virtue of philanthropy and charity, and makes it the highest human attribute. The world will sooner or later tire of philanthropy, and all religion based on it mainly. They cannot long sustain my spirit. In order to avoid delusions, I would fain let man go by, and behold a universe in which man is but a grain of sand. I am sure that those of my thoughts which consist or are contemporaneous with social, personal connections, however humane, are not the wisest and widest, most universal. What is the village, city, State, nation, ay,

the civilized world, that they should concern a man so much? The thought of them affects me in my wisest hours as when I pass a woodchuck's hole. It is a comfortable place to nestle in, no doubt, and we have friends — some sympathizing ones, it may be — and a hearth there; but I have only to get up at midnight, ay, to soar or wander a little in my thought by day, to find them all slumbering. Look at our literature; what a poor, puny, social thing, seeking sympathy! The author troubles himself about his readers, would fain have one before he dies. He stands too near his printer, he corrects the proofs. Not satisfied with defiling one another in this world, we would all go to heaven together. To be a good man (that is, a good neighbor in the widest sense) is but little more than to be a good citizen. Mankind is a gigantic institution; it is a community to which most men belong. It is a test I would apply to my companion. Can he forget man? Can he see the world slumbering? I do not value any view of the universe into which man and the institutions of man enter very largely and absorb much attention. Man is but the place where I stand, and the prospect hence is infinite. The universe is not a chamber of mirrors which reflect me when I reflect. I find that there is other than me. Man is a past phe-

nomenon to philosophy; the universe is larger than enough for man's abode. Some rarely go outdoors; most are always at home at night; very few indeed have stayed out all night once in their lives; fewer still have gone behind the world of humanity, seen its institutions like toad-stools by the wayside.

April 2, 1853. The tree-sparrows and a few blue snow-birds in company sing (the former) very sweetly in the garden this morning. I now see a faint spot on the breast. It says something like a *twee, twee, chit chit, chit-chit-chee-var-r*.

The farmers are trembling for their poultry nowadays. I heard the screams of hens and a tumult among their mistresses (at Dugan's) calling them and scaring away the hawk yesterday. They say they do not lose by hawks in mid-summer. White quotes Linnæus as saying of hawks, "*Paciscuntur inducias cum avibus quamdiu cuculus cucullat,*" but White doubts it. . . . The song-sparrows, the three-spotted, away by the meadow-sides, are very shy and cunning: instead of flying, will frequently trot along the ground under the bushes, or dodge through a wall like a swallow; and I have observed that they generally bring some object, as a rail or branch, between themselves and the face of the walker, — often with outstretched

necks will peep at him for five or ten minutes.

Heard and saw what I call the pine warbler, — *vetter, vetter, vetter, vetter, vet*, — the cool woodland sound. The first this year of the higher-colored birds, after the bluebird and the blackbird's wing, is it not? It affects me as something more tender.

We cannot well afford not to see the geese go over a single spring, and so commence our year regularly.

April 2, 1854. P. M. To Conantum *via* Nut Meadow Brook. Saw black ducks in water and on land. Can see their light throats a great way off with my glass. They do not dive, but dip. . . .

The radical leaves of some plants appear to have started, look brighter, — the shepherd's purse, and plainly the skunk - cabbage. In the brook there is the least possible springing yet, — a little yellow lily in the ditch, and sweet-flag starting. I was just sitting on the rail over the brook when I heard something which reminded me of the song of the robin in rainy days in past springs. Why is it that not the note itself, but something which reminds me of it, should affect me most? — the ideal instead of the actual. . . .

The tree-sparrows make the alders, etc., ring.

They have a metallic chirp and a short canary-like warble. They keep company with the hie-malis.

April 2, 1855. Green is essentially vivid or the color of life, and it is therefore most brilliant when a plant is moist or most alive. . . . The word, according to Webster, is from the Saxon *grêne*, to grow, and hence is the color of herbage when growing.

April 2, 1856. It is evident that it depends on the character of the season whether this flower or that is the most forward, whether there is more or less snow, or cold, or rain, etc.

I am tempted to stretch myself on the bare ground above the Cliff, to feel its warmth on my back and smell the earth and the dry leaves. I see and hear flies and bees about. A large buff-edged butterfly flutters by along the edge of the Cliff, *Vanessa antiopa*. Though so little of the earth is bare, this frail creature has been warmed into life again. Here is the broken shell of one of those large white snails, *Helix albolabris*, on the top of the Cliff. I am rejoiced to find anything so pretty. I cannot but think it nobler, as it is rarer, to appreciate some beauty than to feel much sympathy with misfortune. The powers are kinder to me when they permit me to enjoy this beauty than if they were to express any amount of compassion for me. I could never excuse them that.

April 2, 1858. At the spring on the west side of Fair Haven Hill I startle a striped snake. It is a large one, with a white stripe down the dorsal ridge between two black ones, and on each side the last a buff one, and blotchy brown sides, darker towards the tail. Beneath, greenish yellow. This snake generally has a pinkish cast. There is another, evidently of the same species, but not half so large, with its neck lying affectionately across the first. When seen by itself you might have thought of a distinct species. The dorsal line on this one is bright yellow, though not so bright as the lateral ones and the yellow about the head. Also, the black is more glossy, and this snake has no pink cast. No doubt on almost every such warm bank now you will find a snake lying out. They allowed me to lift their heads with a stick four or five inches without stirring, nor did they mind the flies that alighted on them, looking steadily at me without the slightest motion of head, body, or eyes, as if they were of marble; and as you looked back at them, you continually forgot that they were real, and not imaginary.

On the side of Fair Haven Hill I go looking for baywings, turning my glass to each sparrow on a rock or tree. At last I see one which flies up straight from a rock eighty or one hundred feet, and warbles a peculiar, long, and pleasant

strain, after the manner of the sky-lark, methinks; and close by I see another, apparently a baywing (though I do not see the white on its tail), and it utters, while sitting, the same subdued, rather peculiar strain. . . .

It is not important that the poet should say some particular thing, but that he should speak in harmony with nature. The tone and pitch of his voice is the main thing.

It appears to me that the wisest philosophers I know are as foolish as Sancho Panza dreaming of his island. Considering the ends they propose and the obstructions in their path, they are even. One philosopher is feeble enough alone; but observe how each multiplies his difficulties, — by how many unnecessary links he allies himself to the existing state of things. He girds himself for his enterprise with fasting and prayer, and then, instead of pressing forward like a light-armed soldier, with the fewest possible hindrances, he at once hooks on to some immovable institution, and begins to sing and scratch gravel *towards* his objects. Why, it is as much as the strongest man can do decently to bury his friends and relations, without making a new world of it. But if the philosopher is as foolish as Sancho Panza, he is also as wise, and nothing so truly makes a thing so or so as thinking it so.

April 2, 1859. As I go down the street just after sunset, I hear many snipe to-night. At this hour, that is, in the twilight, they make a hovering sound high in the air over the villages, and the inhabitants do not know what to refer it to. It is very easily imitated by a sort of shuddering with the breath. It reminds me of calmer nights. Hardly one in a hundred hears it, and perhaps not nearly so many know what creature makes it. Perhaps no one dreamed of snipe an hour ago, and the air seemed empty of such as they; but as soon as the dusk begins, so that a bird's flight is concealed, you hear this peculiar, spirit-suggesting sound, now far, now near, heard through and above the evening din of the village. I did not hear one when I returned up the street half an hour later.

April 3, 1841. Friends will not only live in harmony, but in melody.

April 3, 1842. I can remember when I was more enriched by a few cheap rays of light falling on the pond side than by this broad sunny day. Riches have wings, indeed. The weight of present woe will express the sweetness of past experience. When sorrow comes, how easy it is to remember pleasure! When in winter the bees cannot make new honey, they consume the old.

Experience is in the head and fingers. The heart is inexperienced.

I have just heard the flicker among the oaks on the hillside ushering in a new dynasty. It is the age and youth of time. Why did nature set this lure for sickly mortals? Eternity could not begin with more security and momentousness than the spring. The summer's eternity is reëstablished by this note. All sights and sounds are seen and heard both in time and eternity; and when the eternity of any sight or sound strikes the eye or ear, they are intoxicated with delight.

Sometimes, as through a dim haze, we see objects in their eternal relations. They stand like Stonehenge and the Pyramids, and we wonder who set them up, and what for.

The destiny of the soul can never be studied by the reason, for the modes of the latter are not ecstatic. In the wisest calculation or demonstration I but play a game with myself. I am not to be taken captive by myself. I cannot convince myself. God must convince. I can calculate a problem in arithmetic, but not any morality. Virtue is incalculable, as it is inestimable. Man's destiny is but virtue or manhood. It is wholly moral, to be learned only by the life of the soul. The reason, before it can be applied to such a subject, will have to

fetter and restrict it. How can he, step by step, perform that long journey who has not conceived whither he is bound? How can he expect to perform an arduous journey without interruption who has no passport to the end? On this side of man is the actual, and on the other the ideal. The former is the province of the reason, which is even a divine light when directed upon that, but it cannot reach forward into the ideal without blindness. The moon was made to rule by night, but the sun to rule by day. Reason will be but a pale cloud like the moon when one ray of divine light comes to illumine the soul.

April 3, 1852. They call that northernmost sea, thought to be free from ice, "Polina." The coldest natures, persevere with them, go far enough, are found to have open sea in the highest latitudes.

April 3, 1853. Nothing is more saddening than an ineffectual, proud intercourse with those of whom we expect sympathy and encouragement. I repeatedly find myself drawn toward certain persons but to be disappointed. No concessions which are not radical are the least satisfaction. By myself I can live and thrive, but in the society of incompatible friends I starve. To cultivate their society is to cherish a sore which can only be healed by abandoning

them. I cannot trust my neighbor whom I know any more than I can trust the law of gravitation and jump off the Cliffs.

The last two Tribunes I have not looked at. I have no time to read newspapers. If you chance to live and move and have your being in that thin stratum in which the events which make the news transpire, — thinner than the paper on which it is printed, — then these things will fill the world for you. But if you soar above or dive below that plane, you cannot remember nor be reminded of them.

P. M. To Cliffs. At Hayden's I hear hylas on two keys or notes. Heard one after the other ; the sounds might be mistaken for the varied note of one. The little croakers, too, are very lively there. I get close to them, and witness a great commotion, they half hopping and half swimming about with their heads out, apparently in pursuit of each other, perhaps thirty or forty within a few square yards, and fifteen or twenty within one yard. There is not only the incessant lively croaking of many together, as usually heard, but a lower, hoarser, squirming kind of croak, perhaps from the other sex. As I approach nearer, they disperse and bury themselves in the grass at the bottom, only one or two remaining outstretched upon the surface; and at another step, these, too, conceal themselves.

April 3, 1856. P. M. To Hunt's Bridge. It is surprising how the earth on south banks begins to show some greenness in its russet cheeks in this rain and fog, — a precious emerald-green tinge, almost like a green mildew, the growth of the night, a green blush suffusing her cheek, heralded by twittering birds. This sight is no less interesting than the corresponding bloom and ripe blush of the fall. How encouraging to perceive again that faint tinge of green spreading amid the russet on earth's cheeks! I revive with Nature. Her victory is mine. This is my jewelry.

I see small flocks of robins running on the bared portions of the meadow; hear the sprayey tinkle of the song-sparrow along the hedges. Hear also the squeaking notes of an advancing flock of redwings or grackles (am uncertain which make that sound), somewhere high in the sky. At length detect them high overhead, advancing northeast in loose array, with broad, extended front, competing with each other, winging their way to some northern meadow which they remember. The note of some is like the squeaking of many signs, while others accompany them with a steady, dry *tchuk-tchuk*.

Hosmer is overhauling a vast heap of manure in the rear of his barn, turning the ice within it up to the light. Yet he asks despairingly

what life is for, and says he does not expect to stay here long. But I have just come from reading Columella, who describes the same kind of spring look in that, to him, new spring of the world with hope, and I suggest to be brave and hopeful with nature. Human life may be transitory and full of trouble, but the perennial mind whose survey extends from that spring to this, from Columella to Hosmer, is superior to change. I will identify myself with that which did not die with Columella and will not die with Hosmer.

Coming home along the causeway, I hear a robin sing (though faintly) as in May. The road is a path, here and there shoveled through drifts which are considerably higher than a man's head on each side.

April 3, 1858. Going down town this morning, I am surprised by the rich strain of the purple finch from the elms. Three or four have arrived and lodged against the elms of our street, which runs east and west across their course, and they are now mingling their loud, rich strain with that of the tree-sparrows, robins, bluebirds, etc. The hearing of this note implies some improvement in the acoustics of the air. It reminds me of that genial state of the air when the elms are in bloom. They sit still over the street, and make a business of warbling. They advertise one, surely, of some

additional warmth and serenity. How their note rings over the roofs of the village! You wonder that even the sleepers are not awakened by it, to inquire who is there. And yet probably not another in all the town observes their coming, and not half a dozen ever distinguish them in their lives. But the very mob of the town know the hard names of Germanians or Swiss families who once sang here or elsewhere.

When I have been out thus the whole day, and spend the whole afternoon returning, it seems to me pitiful and ineffectual to be out, as usual, only in the afternoon, — as if you had come late to a feast, after your betters had done. The afternoon seems at best a long twilight after the fresh and bright forenoon.

The gregariousness of men is their most contemptible and discouraging aspect. See how they follow each other like sheep, not knowing why! Day & Martin's blacking was preferred by the last generation, and also is by this. They have not so good a reason for preferring this or that religion. Apparently, in ancient times several parties were nearly equally matched. They appointed a committee and made a compromise, agreeing to vote or believe so and so, and they still helplessly abide by that. Men are the inveterate foes of all im-

provement. Generally speaking, they think more of their hen-houses than of any desirable heaven. If you aspire to anything better than politics, expect no coöperation from men. They will not further anything good. You must prevail of your own force, as a plant springs and grows by its own vitality.

April 3, 1859. The bæomyces is in perfection this rainy day. I have for some weeks been insisting on the beauty and richness of the moist and saturated crust of the earth. It has seemed to me more attractive and living than ever, a very sensitive cuticle, teeming with life, especially in the rainy days. I have looked on it as the skin of a pard. And on a more close examination I am borne out by discovering in this now so bright bæomyces, and in other earthy lichens, and in cladonias, and also in the very pretty red and yellow stemmed mosses, a manifest sympathy with and an expression of the general life of the crust. This early and hardy cryptogamous vegetation is, as it were, a flowering of the crust of the earth. Lichens and these mosses which depend on moisture are now most rampant. If you examine it, this brown earth crust is not dead. We need a popular name for the bæomyces. C—— suggests “pink mould.” Perhaps “pink shot or eggs” would do. . .

Men's minds run so much on work and money that the mass instantly associate all literary labor with a pecuniary reward. They are vainly curious to know how much money the lecturer or author gets for his work. They think that the naturalist takes so much pains to collect plants or animals because he is paid for it. An Irishman who saw me in the fields making a minute in my note-book took it for granted that I was casting up my wages, and actually inquired what they came to, as if he had never dreamed of any other use for writing. I might have quoted to him that the wages of sin is death, as the most pertinent answer. What do you get for lecturing now? I am occasionally asked. It is the more amusing, since I only lecture about once a year out of my native town, often not at all; so that I might, if my objects were merely pecuniary, give up the business. Once, when I was walking in Staten Island, looking about me, as usual, a man who saw me would not believe me when I told him that I was indeed from New England, but was not looking at that region with a pecuniary view, — a view to speculation; and he offered me a handsome bonus if I would sell his farm for him.

April 4, 1839. The atmosphere of morning gives a healthy hue to our prospects. Disease

is a sluggard that overtakes, never encounters us. We have the start each day, and may fairly distance him before the dew is off; but if we recline in the bowers of noon, he will, after all, come up with us. The morning dew breeds no cold. We enjoy a diurnal reprieve in the beginning of each day's creation. In the morning we do not believe in expediency; we will start afresh, and have no patching, no temporary fixtures. In the afternoon man has an interest in the past; his eye is divided, and he sees indifferently well either way.

Drifting in a sultry day on the sluggish waters of the pond, I almost cease to live, and begin to be. A boatman stretched on the deck of his craft, and dallying with the noon, would be as apt an emblem of eternity for me as the serpent with his tail in his mouth. I am never so prone to lose my identity. I am dissolved in the haze.

April 4, 1841. The rattling of the tea-kettle below stairs reminds me of the cow-bells I used to hear when berrying in the Great Fields many years ago, sounding distant and deep amid the birches. That cheap piece of tinkling brass which the farmer hangs about his cow's neck has been more to me than the tons of metal which are swung in the belfry.

April 4, 1852. It is refreshing to stand on

the face of the Cliff and see the water gliding over the surface of the almost perpendicular rock in a broad, thin sheet, pulsing over it. It reflects the sun for half a mile like a patch of snow. As you stand close by, it brings out the colors of the lichens like polishing or varnish. It is admirable regarded as a dripping fountain. You have lichens and moss on the surface, and starting saxifrage, ferns still green, and huckleberry bushes in the crevices. The rocks never appear so diversified and cracked, as if the chemistry of nature were now in full force. Then the drops falling perpendicularly from a projecting rock have a pleasing geometrical effect.

I see the snow lying thick on the south side of the Peterboro' Hills, and, though the ground is bare from the seashore to their base, I presume it is covered with snow from their base to the icy sea. I feel the northwest air, cooled by the snow, on my cheek. Those hills are probably the dividing line at present between the bare ground and the snow-clad ground stretching three thousand miles to the Saskatchewan and Mackenzie, and the icy sea.

April 4, 1853. P. M. Rain, rain. To Clematis Brook via Lee's Bridge. Again I notice that early reddish or purplish grass that lies flat on the pools, like a warm blush suffusing the

youthful face of the year. A warm, dripping rain heard on one's umbrella as on a snug roof, and on the leaves without, suggests comfort. We go abroad with a slow but sure contentment, like turtles under their shells. We never feel so comfortable as when we are abroad in a storm with satisfaction. Our comfort is positive then. We are all compact, and our thoughts collected. We walk under the clouds and mists as under a roof. Now we seem to hear the ground a-soaking up the rain, which does not fall ineffectually, as on a frozen surface. We too are penetrated and revived by it. Robins still sing, and song - sparrows more or less, and blackbirds, and the unfailing jay screams. How the thirsty grass rejoices! It has pushed up visibly since morning, and fields that were completely russet yesterday are already tinged with green. We rejoice with the grass. I hear the hollow sound of drops falling into the water under Hubbard's Bridge, and each one makes a conspicuous bubble which is floated down stream. Instead of ripples, there are a myriad dimples in the stream. The lichens remember the sea to-day; the usually dry cladonias which are so crisp under the feet are full of moist vigor. The rocks speak, and tell the tales inscribed on them. Their inscriptions are brought out. I pause to study their geography. At Conantum

End I saw a red-tailed hawk launch himself away from an oak by the pond at my approach, — a heavy flyer, flapping even like the great bittern at first. Heavy forward. After turning Lee's Cliff, I heard, methought, more birds singing even than in fair weather, — tree-sparrows, whose song has the character of the canary's, *Fringilla hiemalis* (chill-till), the sweet strains of the fox-colored sparrow, song-sparrows, a nuthatch, jays, crows, bluebirds, robins, and a large congregation of blackbirds. They suddenly alight with great din in a stubble field just over the wall, not perceiving me and my umbrella behind the pitch-pines, and there feed silently. Then, getting uneasy or anxious, they fly up on to an apple-tree, where, being reassured, commences a rich but deafening concert, — *o-gurgle-ee-e, o-gurgle-ee-e*, — some of the most liquid notes ever heard, as if produced by some of the water of the Pierian spring flowing through a kind of musical water pipe, and at the same time setting in motion a multitude of fine vibrating metallic springs. Like a shepherd merely meditating most enrapturing glees on such a water pipe. A more liquid bagpipe or clarinet, immersed like bubbles in a thousand sprayey notes, the bubbles half lost in the spray. When I show myself, away they go with a loud, harsh *charr-charr-r*. At first I had

heard an inundation of blackbirds approaching, some beating time with a loud *chuck - chuck*, while the rest played a hurried, gurgling fugue.

A rainy day is to the walker in solitude and retirement like the night. Few travelers are about, and they half hidden under umbrellas and confined to the highways. The thoughts run in a different channel from usual. It is somewhat like the dark day, it is a light night. How cheerful the roar of a brook swollen by the rain, especially if there is no sound of the mill in it! A woodcock went off from the shore of Clematis or Nightshade Pond with a few slight, rapid sounds like a watchman's rattle half revolved.

April 4, 1855. P. M. To Clematis Brook via Lee's. A pleasant day; growing warmer; a slight haze. Now the hedges and apple-trees are alive with fox-colored sparrows all over the town, and their imperfect strains are occasionally heard.

It is a fine air, but more than tempered by the snow in the northwest. All the earth is bright; the very pines glisten, and the water is a bright blue. A gull is circling round Fair Haven Pond, seen white against the woods and hillsides, looking as if it would dive for a fish every moment, and occasionally resting on the ice. The water above Lee's Bridge is all alive

with ducks. There are many flocks of eight or ten together, their black heads and white breasts seen above the water, — more of them than I have seen before this season, — and a gull with its whole body above the water, perhaps standing where it is shallow.

Not only are the evergreens brighter, but the pools, as that upland one behind Lee's, the ice as well as snow about their edges being completely melted, have a peculiarly warm and bright April look, as if ready to be inhabited by frogs. . . .

Returning from Mount Misery, the pond and river each presented a fine warm view. The slight haze which, in a warmer day at this season, softens the rough surface which the winter has left, and fills the copses seemingly with life, made the landscape remarkably fair. There is a remarkable variety in the view at present from this summit. The sun feels as warm as in June on my ear. Half a mile off, in front, is this elysian water, high over which two wild ducks are winging their rapid flight eastward through the bright air. On each side and beyond, the earth is clad with a warm russet, more pleasing perhaps than green; and far beyond all, in the northwest horizon, my eye rests on a range of snow-covered mountains glistening in the sun.

April 4, 1860. The birds are eager to sing as the flowers to bloom, after raw weather has held them in check.

April 5, 1841. This long series of desultory mornings does not tarnish the brightness of the prospective days. Surely faith is not dead. Wood, water, earth, air are essentially what they are. Only society has degenerated. This lament for a golden age is only a lament for golden men.

April 5, 1854. This morning heard a familiar twittering over the house; looked up and saw white-bellied swallows. Another saw them yesterday. Surveying all day. In Carlisle. I have taken off my outside coat, perhaps for the first time, and hung it on a tree. The zephyr is positively agreeable on my cheek. I am thinking what an elysian day it is, and how I seem always to be keeping the flocks of Admetus such days, that is my luck, when I hear a single short stertorous croak from some pool half filled with dry leaves. You may see anything now, — the buff-edged butterfly and many hawks along the meadow; and hark! while I was writing down that field note, the shrill *peep* of the hylodes was borne to me from afar through the woods.

I rode with my employer a dozen miles to-day, keeping a profound silence almost all the

way, as the most simple and natural course. I treated him simply as if he had bronchitis and could not speak, just as I would a sick man, a crazy man, or an idiot. The disease was only an unconquerable stiffness in a well-meaning and sensible man.

Begin to look off the hills and see the landscape again through a slight haze, with warm wind on the cheek.

April 5, 1855. 9 A. M. To Sudbury line by boat. . . . It is a smooth April-morning water, and many sportsmen are out in their boats. I see a pleasure boat on the smooth surface away by the Rock, resting lightly as a feather in the air. Scare up a snipe close to the water's edge, and soon after a hen-hawk from the Clam-shell oaks. The last looks larger on his perch than flying. The snipe, too, then, like crows, robins, blackbirds, and hens, is found near the water-side where is the first spring (alders, white maples, etc., etc.); and there, too, especially, are heard the song and tree sparrows and pewees; and even the hen-hawk, at this season, haunts these for his prey. Inland, the groves are almost completely silent as yet. The concert of song and tree sparrows at Willow Row is now very full, and their different notes are completely mingled. See a single white-bellied swallow dashing over

the river. He, too, is attracted by the early insects that begin to be seen over the water. It being Fast Day, we on the water hear the loud and musical sound of bells ringing for church in the surrounding towns.

April 6, 1853. 6 A. M. To Cliffs. The robin is the singer at present, such is its power and universality, being heard both in garden and wood. Morning and evening he does not fail, perched on some elm or the like, and in rainy days it is one long morning or evening. The song-sparrow is still more universal, but not so powerful. The lark, too, is equally constant morning and evening, but confined to certain localities, as is the blackbird to some extent. The bluebird, with feebler but not less sweet warbling, helps fill the air, and the phœbe does her part. The tree-sparrow, *Fringilla hiemalis*, and fox-colored sparrows make the meadow-sides or gardens where they are flitting vocal, the first with its canary-like twittering, the second with its lively ringing trills or jingle. The third is a very sweet and more powerful singer, which would be memorable if we heard him long enough. The woodpecker's tapping, though not musical, suggests pleasant associations in the cool morning, is inspiriting, enlivening. I hear no hylas nor croakers in the morning. Is it too cool for

them? The gray branches of the oaks, which have lost still more of their leaves, seen against the pines when the sun is rising and falling on them, how rich and interesting! Hear the faint, swelling, far-off beat of a partridge.

P. M. To Second Division Brook. . . . All along on the south side of this [Clam-shell] hill, on the edge of the meadow, the air resounds with the hum of honey-bees, attracted by the flower of the skunk-cabbage. I first heard the fine, peculiarly sharp hum of the honey-bee before I thought of them. Some hummed hollowly within the spathe, perchance to give notice to their fellows that the plant was occupied, for they repeatedly looked in and backed out on finding another. It was surprising to see them directed by their instincts to these localities (while the earth has still but a wintry aspect, so far as vegetation is concerned), buzz around some obscure spathe close to the ground, well knowing what they are about, then alight and enter. As the plants were very numerous for thirty or forty rods, there must have been some hundreds, at least, of bees there at once. I watched many when they entered and came out, and they all had little yellow pellets of pollen at their thighs. As the skunk-cabbage comes out before the willow, it is probable that the former is the first flower they visit. It is

the more surprising, as the flower is, for the most part, invisible within the spathe. Some of these spathes are now quite large and twisted up like cows' horns, not curved over, as usual. Commonly they make a pretty little crypt or shrine for the flower. Lucky that this flower does not flavor their honey.

One cowslip, though it shows the yellow, is not fairly out, but will be by to-morrow. How they improve their time. Not a moment of sunshine is lost. One thing I may depend on, there has been no idling with the flowers. Nature loses not a moment, takes no vacation. They advance as steadily as a clock. These plants, now protected by the water, are just peeping forth. I should not be surprised to find that they drew in their heads in a frosty night.

Returning. Saw a pigeon woodpecker flash away, showing the rich golden underside of its glancing wings and the large whitish spot on its back, and presently I heard its familiar, long-repeated, loud note, almost as familiar as that of a barn-door fowl, which it somewhat resembles. The robins, too, now toward sunset, perched on the old apple-trees in Tarbel's orchard, twirl forth their evening lays unweariedly. . . . To-night, for the first time, I hear the hylas in full blast.

April 6, 1854. A still warmer day than yesterday, a warm, moist, rain-smelling, west wind. I am surprised to find so much of the white maples already out. The light-colored stamens show some rods. Probably they began as early as day before yesterday. They resound with the hum of honey-bees heard a dozen rods off, and you see thousands of them about the flowers against the sky. They know where to look for the white maple, and when. Their susurrus carries me forward some months toward summer. I was reminded before of those still, warm, summer noons when the breams' nests are left dry, and the fishes retreat from the shallows into the cooler depths, and the cows stand up to their bellies in the rivers. . . . The alders, both kinds, just above the hemlocks, have just begun to shed their pollen. They are hardly as forward as the white maples, but they are not in so warm a position as some. . . . In clearing out the Assabet spring, disturbed two small speckled (*palustris*) frogs, just beginning to move. . . . Heard the snipe over the meadows this evening. Probably was to be heard for a night or two. Sounds on different keys, as if approaching or receding over the meadows recently become bare.

April 6, 1855. . . . I go up the Assabet in my boat. The blackbirds have now begun to

frequent the water's edge in the meadow, the ice being sufficiently out. The aspect of April waters, smooth and commonly high, before many flowers (none yet) or any leafing, while the landscape is still russet, and frogs are just awakening, is peculiar. It began yesterday. A very few white-maple stamens stand out already loosely enough to blow in the wind, and some alder catkins look almost ready to shed pollen. On the hillsides I smell the dried leaves, and hear a few flies buzzing over them. The banks of the river are alive with song-sparrows and tree-sparrows. They now sing in advance of vegetation, as the flowers will blossom. Those slight tinkling, twittering sounds, called the singing of birds, have come to enliven the bare twigs before the buds show any signs of starting. . . . You can hear all day, from time to time, in any part of the village, the sound of a gun fired at ducks. Yesterday I was wishing that I could find a dead duck floating in the water, as I had found muskrats and a hare, and now I see something bright and reflecting the light from the edge of the alders five or six rods off. Can it be a duck? I can hardly believe my eyes. I am near enough to see its green head and neck. I am delighted to find a perfect specimen of the *Mergus merganser*, or goosander, undoubtedly shot yester-

day by the Fast Day sportsmen. I take a small flattened shot from its wing, flattened against the wing bone, apparently. The wing is broken, and it is shot through the head. It is a perfectly fresh and very beautiful bird. As I raise it, I get sight of its long, slender vermilion bill (color of red sealing-wax), and its clean, bright orange legs and feet, and then of its perfectly smooth and spotlessly pure white breast and belly, tinged with a faint salmon, or a delicate buff inclining to salmon. . . . I afterwards took three small shot from it which were flattened against the bill's base and perhaps the quills' shafts. This, according to Wilson, is one of the mergansers or fisher-ducks, of which there are nine or ten species, and we have four in America. It is the largest of these four, . . . called water pheasant, shel-drake, fisherman diver, etc., as well as goosander. . . . My bird is twenty-five and seven eighths inches long and thirty-five in alar extent. From point of wing to end of primaries, eleven inches. It is a great diver, and does not mind the cold. It appears admirably adapted for diving and swimming. Its body is flat, and its tail short, flat, compact, and wedge-shaped. Its eyes peer out from a slight slit or semicircle in the skin of the head, and its legs are flat and thin in one direction, and the toes shut up com-

pactly so as to create the least friction when drawing them forward, but their broad webs spread three inches and a half when they take a stroke. The web is extended three eighths of an inch beyond the inner toe of each foot. There are very conspicuous black teeth, like serrations, along the edges of its bill, and this also is roughened, so that it may hold its prey securely. The breast appeared quite dry when I raised it from the water. The head and neck are, as Wilson says, black, glossed with green, but the lower part of the neck pure white, and these colors bound on each other so abruptly that one appears to be sewed on to the other. It is a perfect wedge from the middle of its body to the end of its tail, is only three and one fourth inches deep from back to breast at the thickest part, while the greatest breadth horizontally (at the base of the legs) is five inches and a half. I suspect that I have seen near one hundred of these birds this spring, but I never got so near one before. . . . Yarrell says it is the largest of the British mergansers, is a winter visitor, though a few breed in the north of Britain; are rare in the southern counties.

April 7, 1839. The tediousness and detail of execution never occur to the genius projecting; it always antedates the completion of its work. It condescends to give time a few hours to do its bidding in.

Most have sufficient contempt for what is mean to resolve that they will abstain from it, and a few, virtue enough to abide by their resolution, but not often does one attain to such lofty contempt as to require no resolution to be made.

April 7, 1841. My life will wait for nobody, but is being matured still irresistibly while I go about the streets, and chaffer with this man and that to secure it a living. It will cut its own channel, like the mountain stream, which, by the longest ridges and by level prairies, is not kept from the sea finally. So flows a man's life, and will reach the sea water, if not by an earthly channel, yet in dew and rain, overleaping all barriers, with rainbows to announce its victory. It can wind as cunningly and unerringly as water that seeks its level, and shall I complain if the gods make it meander? This staying to buy me a farm is as if the Mississippi should stop to chaffer with a clam-shell.

If from your price ye will not swerve,
 Why then I 'll think the gods reserve
 A greater bargain there above,
 Out of their superabundant love
 Have meantime better for me cared,
 And so will get my stock prepared,
 And sow my seed broadcast in air,
 Certain to reap my harvest there.

April 7, 1853. 10 A. M. Down the river

in boat to Bedford. . . . How handsome the river from those hills, southwest over the Great Meadows, a sheet of sparkling, molten silver, with broad lagoons parted from it by curving lines of low bushes; to the right or northward, now at 2 or 3 P. M., a dark blue, with small, smooth, light edgings, firm plating, under the lee of the shore. . . . As we stand on Nawshawtuck at 5 P. M., looking over the meadows, I doubt if there is a town more adorned by its river than ours. Now, while the sun is low in the west, the northeasterly water is of a peculiarly ethereal, light blue, more beautiful than the sky, and this broad water, with innumerable bays and inlets running up into the land on either side, and often divided by bridges and causeways, as if it were the very essence and richness of the heavens distilled and poured upon the earth, contrasting with the clear russet land and the paler sky from which it has been subtracted; nothing can be more elysian. Is not the blue more ethereal when the sun is at this angle? The river is but a long chain of flooded meadows. I think our most distant, extensive low horizon must be that northeast from this hill over Ball's Hill. It is down the river valley partly, at least, toward the Merri-mack, as it should be.

April 7, 1854. 6 A. M. Down railroad to

Cliffs. The *Populus tremuloides* in a day or two. The hazel stigmas are well out and the catkins loose, but no pollen shed yet. On the Cliff I find, after long and careful search, one sedge above the rocks, low amid the withered blades of last year, out, its little yellow beard amid the dry blades and a few green ones, the first herbaceous flowering I have detected. Fair Haven is completely open.

April 7, 1855. At six this morning to Clam-shell. . . . See thirty or forty goldfinches in a dashing flock, in all respects, notes and all, like lesser redpolls. On the trees . . . and on the railroad bank there is a general twittering and an occasional mew. Then they alight on the ground to feed, along with the *Fringilla hiemalis* and fox-colored sparrows. They are merely olivaceous above, dark about the base of the bill, but bright lemon-yellow in a semicircle on the breast, black wings and tail, with white bar on wings and white vanes to tail. I never saw them here so early before, or probably one or two olivaceous birds I have seen and heard of in other years were this.

April 7, 1860. The purple finch (if not before). This is the *Rana hylecinia* day, awakening of the meadows, though not very warm. The thermometer in Boston is said to be $49^{\circ}+$. Probably, then, when it is about $50^{\circ}+$ at this

season, the river being low, they are to be heard in calm places. Fishes now lie up abundantly in shallow water in the sun; pickerel, and I see several bream. What was lately motionless and lifeless ice is a transparent liquid, in which the stately pickerel moves along. A novel sight is that of the first bream that has come forth from I know not what hibernaculum, moving gently over the still, brown river bottom where scarcely a weed has started. Water is as yet only melted ice, or like that of November, which is ready to become ice.

April 8, 1840. How shall I help myself? By withdrawing into the garret and associating with spiders and mice, determining to meet myself face to face sooner or later. Completely silent and attentive I will be this hour and the next and forever. The most positive life that history notices has been a constant retiring out of life, a wiping one's hands of it, seeing how mean it is, and having nothing to do with it.

April 8, 1841. Friends are the ancient and honorable of the earth. The oldest men did not begin friendship. It is older than Hindostan and the Chinese Empire. How long has it been cultivated, and still it is the staple article. It is a divine league struck forever. Warm days only bring it out to the surface.

There is a friendliness between the sun and the earth in pleasant weather. The gray content of the land is its color.

You can tell what another's suspicions are by what you feel forced to become. You will wear a new character, like a strange habit, in his presence.

April 8, 1852. . . . I notice the alder in blossom, its reddish-brown catkins now lengthened and loose. What mean the apparently younger small red (catkins?)? They are the female aments.

April 8, 1853. . . . Saw and heard my small pine warbler shaking out his trills or jingle, even like money coming to its bearing. They appear so much the smaller from perching high in the tops of white pines, and flitting from tree to tree at that height. Is not my night warbler the white-eyed vireo? not yet here.

April 8, 1854. . . . At Nut Meadow Brook saw, or rather heard, a muskrat plunge into the brook before me, and saw him endeavoring in vain to bury himself in the sandy bottom, looking like an amphibious animal. I stooped and, taking him by the tail, which projected, tossed him ashore. He did not lose the points of the compass, but turned directly to the brook again, though it was toward me, and, plunging in,

buried himself in the mud, and that was the last I saw of him. Saw a large bird sail along over the edge of Wheeler's cranberry meadow just below Fair Haven, which I at first thought a gull. But with my glass I found it appeared like a hawk, and had a perfectly white head and tail, and broad black or blackish wings. It sailed and circled along over the low cliff, and the crows dived at it in the field of my glass. I saw it well both above and beneath as it turned, and then it passed off to hover over the cliffs at a greater height. It was undoubtedly a white-headed eagle, though to the eye it was but a large hawk.

I find that I can criticise my composition best when I stand at a little distance from it, when I do not see it, for instance. I make a little chapter of contents, which enables me to recall it page by page to my mind, and judge it more impartially when my manuscript is out of the way. The distraction of surveying enables me rapidly to take new points of view. A day or two of surveying is equal to a journey.

Some poets mature early and die young. Their fruits have a delicious flavor like strawberries, but do not keep till fall or winter. Others are slower in coming to their growth. Their fruits may be less delicious, but are a more lasting food, and are so hardened by the

sun of summer and the coolness of autumn that they keep sound over winter.

April 8, 1859. As I stood by the foot of a middling-sized white pine the other day, on Fair Haven Hill, one of the very windy days, I felt the ground rise and fall under my feet, being lifted by the roots of the pine, which was waving in the wind, so loosely are they planted.

What a pitiful business is the fur trade, which has been pursued now for so many ages, for so many years, by famous companies, which enjoy a profitable monopoly, and control a large part of the earth's surface. Unweariedly they pursue and ferret out small animals by the aid of all the loafing class, tempted by rum and money, that they may rob some little fellow-creature of its coat to adorn or thicken their own, that they may get a fashionable covering in which to hide their heads, or a suitable robe in which to dispense justice to their *fellow-men!* Regarded from the philosopher's point of view it is precisely on a level with rag and bone picking in the streets of cities. The Indian led a more respectable life before he was tempted to debase himself so much by the white man. Think how many musquash and weasel skins the Hudson's Bay Company pile up annually in their warehouses, leaving the bare red carcasses on the banks of the streams through-

out all British America; and this it is chiefly which makes it *British* America. It is the place where Great Britain goes a-mousing. When we see men and boys spend their time shooting and trapping musquash and mink, we cannot but have a poorer opinion of them, unless we thought meanly of them before. Yet the world is imposed on by the fame of the Hudson Bay and Northwest Fur Companies, who are only so many partners, more or less, in the same sort of business, with thousands of just such loafing men and boys in their service to abet them. On the one side is the Hudson Bay Company, on the other the company of scavengers who clear the sewers of Paris of their vermin. There is a good excuse for smoking out or poisoning rats which infest the house, but when they are as far off as Hudson's Bay, I think that we had better let them alone. To such an extent do time and distance, and our imaginations, consecrate at last not only the most ordinary, but even the vilest pursuits. The efforts of legislation from time to time to stem the torrent are significant, as showing that there is some sense and conscience left, but they are insignificant in their effects. . . .

It will not do to be thoughtless with regard to any of our valuables or property. When you get to Europe you will meet the most ten-

der-hearted and delicately bred lady, perhaps the President of the Anti-Slavery Society, or of that for the encouragement of humanity to animals, marching or presiding with the scales from a tortoise's back, obtained by laying live coals on it to make them curl up, stuck in her hair, rat - skins fitting as close to her fingers as erst to the rats; and her cloak, perchance, adorned with the spoils of a hundred skunks. Could she not wear other armor in the war of humanity?

Cold as it is, and has been for several weeks, in all exposed places, I find it unexpectedly warm in perfectly sheltered places where the sun shines, and so it always is in April. The cold wind from the northwest seems distinct and separable from the air here warmed by the sun, and when I sit in some warm and sheltered hollow in the woods, I feel the cold currents drop into it occasionally, just as they are seen to ripple a small lake in such a situation from time to time.

The epigæa is not quite out. The earliest peculiarly *woodland* herbaceous flowers are epigæa, anemone, thalictrum, and (by the first of May) *Viola pedata*. These grow quite in the woods amid dry leaves, nor do they depend so much on water as the very earliest flowers. I am perhaps more surprised by the growth of the

Viola pedata leaves by the side of paths amid the shrub oaks, and half covered with oak leaves, than by any other growth, the situation is so dry and the surrounding bushes so apparently lifeless.

April 9, 1841. The brave man does not mind the call of the trumpet, nor hear the idle clashing of swords without, for the infinite din within. War is but a training compared with the active service of his peace. Is he not at war? Does he not resist the ocean swell within him, and walk as gently as the summer's sea? Would you have him parade in uniform and manœuvre men, whose equanimity is his uniform, and who is himself manœuvred?

April 9, 1853. P. M. To Second Division. The chipping sparrow, with its ashy white breast, white streak over eye, and undivided chestnut crown, holds up its head and pours forth its *che che che che che che*. . . . Saw a pine warbler, by ventriloquism sounding further off than it was, which was seven or eight feet, hopping and flitting from twig to twig, apparently picking the small flies at and about the base of the needles at the extremities of the twigs. . . . A warm and hazy, but breezy day. The sound of the laborers striking the iron nails of the railroad with their sledges is as in the sultry days of summer, — resounds, as it were,

from the hazy sky as from a roof, a more confined, and in that sense more domestic, sound, echoing along between the earth and the low heavens. The same strokes would produce a very different sound in the winter. . . . Beyond the desert, hear the hooting owl, which, as formerly, I at first mistook for the hounding of a dog, a squealing sound followed by *hoo hoo hoo* deliberately, and particularly sonorous and ringing. This at 2 P. M. . . .

The cowslips are well out, the first conspicuous herbaceous flower, for that of the skunk-cabbage is concealed in its spathe.

April 9, 1855. 5¼ A. M. To red bridge just before sunrise. . . . Hear the hoarse, rasping *chuck* or chatter of crow blackbirds, and distinguish their long, broad tails. Wilson says that the only note of the rusty grackle is a *chuck*, though he is told that at Hudson's Bay at the breeding time they sing with a fine note. Here they utter not only a *chuck*, but a fine shrill whistle. They cover the top of a tree now, and their concert is of this character. They all seem laboring together to get out a clear strain, as it were wetting their whistles against their arrival at Hudson's Bay. They begin, as it were, by disgorging or spitting it out like so much tow, from a full throat, and conclude with a clear, fine, shrill, ear-piercing

whistle. Then away they go, all chattering together.

April 9, 1858. . . . I doubt if men do ever simply and naturally glorify God in the ordinary sense, but it is remarkable how sincerely in all ages they glorify nature. The praising of Aurora, for instance, under some form in all ages is obedience to as irresistible an instinct as that which impels the frogs to peep.

April 9, 1859. P. M. . . . We go seeking the south sides of hills and woods, or deep hollows to walk in, this cold and blustering day. We sit by the side of little Goose Pond to watch the ripples on it. Now it is merely smooth, and then there drops down upon it, deep as it lies amid the hills, a sharp and narrow blast of the icy north wind careering above, striking it perhaps by a point or an edge, and swiftly spreading along it, making a dark blue ripple. Now four or five windy bolts, sharp or blunt, strike it at once and spread different ways. The boisterous but playful north wind evidently stoops from a considerable height to dally with this fair pool which it discerns beneath. You could sit there and watch these blue shadows playing over the surface like light and shade on changeable silk, for hours. It reminds me, too, of swift Camilla on a field of grain. The wind often touches the water only

by the finest points or edges. It is thus when you look in some measure from the sun, but if you move round so as to come more nearly opposite to him, then these dark blue ripples are all sparkles too bright to look at, for now you see the sides of the wavelets which reflect the sun to you. . . . Watching the ripples fall and dart across the surface of low-lying and small woodland lakes is one of the amusements of these windy March and April days. It is only on small lakes deep sunk in hollows in the woods that you can see or study them these days, for the winds sweep over the whole breadth of larger lakes incessantly, but they only touch these sheltered lakelets by fine points and edges from time to time.

And then there is such a fiddling in the woods, such a viol-creaking of bough on bough, that you would think music was being born again, as in the days of Orpheus. Orpheus and Apollo are certainly there taking lessons; ay, and the jay and the blackbird, too, learn now where they stole their "thunder." They are, perforce, silent, meditating new strains.

When the playful breeze drops on the pool, it springs to right and left quick as a kitten playing with dead leaves, clapping her paw on them. . . . Those ripple lakes lie now in the midst of mostly bare brown or tawny dry

wood-lands, themselves the most living objects. They may say to the first woodland flowers,
We played with the north winds here before
you were born.

April 10, 1841. How much virtue there is in simply seeing. We may almost say that the hero has striven in vain for his preëminency, if the student oversees him. The woman who sits in the house and *sees* is a match for a stirring captain. Those still, piercing eyes, as faithfully exercised as their talent, will keep her even with Alexander or Shakespeare. They may go to Asia with parade, or to fairyland, but not beyond her ray. We are as much as we see. Faith is sight and knowledge. The hands only serve the eyes. The farthest blue streak in the horizon I can see, I may reach before many sunsets. What I saw alters not. In my night when I wander, it is still steadfast as the star which the sailor steers by.

Whoever has had one thought quite lonely, and could contentedly digest that, knowing that none could accept it, may rise to the heights of humanity and overlook all living men as from a pinnacle. Speech never made man master of men, but the eloquently refraining from it.

April 10, 1853. . . . The saxifrage is beginning to be abundant, elevating its flowers somewhat, pure trustful white amid its pretty

notched and reddish cup of leaves. The white saxifrage is a response from earth to the increased light of the year; the yellow crowfoot, to the increased heat of the sun. . . .

When the farmer cleans out his ditches, I mourn the loss of many a flower which he calls a weed. The main charm about the lower road, just beyond the bridge, to me has been in the little grove of locusts, sallows, birches, etc., which has sprung up on the bank as you rise the hill. Yesterday I saw a man who is building a house near by cutting them down. Finding he was going to cut them all, I said if I were in his place I would not have them cut for a hundred dollars. "Why," said he, "they are nothing but a parcel of prickly bushes and are not worth anything. I'm going to build a new wall here." And so to ornament the approach to his house he substituted a bare ugly wall for an interesting grove.

April 10, 1854. April rain. How sure a rain is to bring the tree-sparrows into the yard, to sing sweetly, canary-like.

I bought me a spyglass some weeks since. I buy but few things, and those not till long after I begin to want them, so that when I do get them I am prepared to make a perfect use of them and extract their whole sweetness.

April 11, 1841. A greater baldness my life

seeks, as the crest of some bare hill, which towns and cities do not afford. I want a directer relation with the sun.

April 11, 1852. . . . The sight of Nut Meadow Brook in Brown's land reminds me that the attractiveness of a brook depends much on the character of its bottom. I love just now to see one flowing through soft sand like this, where it wears a deep but irregular channel, now wider and shallower with distinct ripple marks, now shelving off suddenly to indistinct depths, meandering as well up and down as from side to side, deepest where narrowest, and ever gullying under this bank or that, its bottom lifted up to one side or the other, the current inclining to one side. I stop to look at the circular shadows of the dimples, over the yellow sand, and the dark brown clams on their edges in the sand at the bottom. (I hear the sound of the piano below as I write this, and feel as if the winter in me were at length beginning to thaw, for my spring has been even more backward than nature's. For a month past life has been a thing incredible to me. None but the kind gods can make me sane. If only they will let their south winds blow on me. I ask to be melted. You can only ask of the metals that they be tender to the fire that melts them. To naught else can they be tender.)

The sweet flags are now starting up under water two inches high, and minnows dart.

A pure brook is a very beautiful object to study minutely. It will bear the closest inspection, even to the fine air-bubbles, like minute globules of quicksilver, that lie on its bottom. The minute particles or spangles of golden mica in these sands, when the sun shines on them, remind one of the golden sands we read of. Everything is washed clean and bright, and the water is the best glass through which to see it. . . .

If I am too cold for human friendship, I trust I shall not soon be too cold for natural influences. It appears to be a law that you cannot have a deep sympathy with both man and nature. Those qualities which bring you near to the one estrange you from the other. . . .

Every man will be a poet if he can, otherwise a philosopher or man of science. This proves the superiority of the poet.

It is hard for a man to take money from his friends for any service. This suggests how all men should be related.

Ah! when a man has traveled, and robbed the horizon of his native fields of its mystery and poetry, its indefinite promise, tarnished the blue of distant mountains with his feet, when he has done this, he may begin to think

of another world. What is this longer to him? . . .

At what an expense any valuable work is performed! — at the expense of a life! If you do one thing well, what else are you good for meanwhile?

SUMMER

FROM THE JOURNAL OF
HENRY D. THOREAU

EDITED BY
H. G. O. BLAKE

SUMMER.

June 1, 1852. Evening. To the Lee place. The moon about full. The sounds I hear by the bridge: the midsummer frog (I think it is not the toad), the night-hawk, crickets, the peet-weet (it is early), the hum of dor-bugs, and the whippoorwill. The boys are coming home from fishing, for the river is down at last.

June 1, 1853. Quite a fog this morning. Does it not always follow the cooler nights after the first really warm weather about the end of May? Saw a water-snake yesterday with its tail twisted about some dead-weed stubble, and quite dry and stiff, as if it were preparing to shed its skin. . . .

Bees are swarming now, and those who keep them often have to leave their work in haste to secure them.

P. M. To Walden. Summer begins now, about a week past, with the expanded leaves, the shade, and warm weather. Cultivated fields, too, are leaving out, that is, corn and potatoes

coming up. Most trees have leaved and are now forming fruit. Young berries, too, are forming, and birds are being hatched. Dor-bugs and other insects have come forth the first warm evening after showers. The birds have now all (?) come, and no longer fly in flocks. The hylodes are no longer heard; the bull-frogs begin to trump. Thick and extensive fogs in the morning begin. Plants are rapidly growing, shooting. Hoeing corn has commenced. The first bloom of the year is over. It is now the season of growth. Have not wild animals now henceforth their young, and fishes, too?

The pincushion galls on young white oaks are now among the most beautiful objects in the woods, — coarse, woolly, white, spotted with bright red or crimson on the exposed side. It is remarkable that a mere gall, which at first we are inclined to regard as something abnormal, should be made so beautiful, as if it were the flower of the tree; that a disease, an excrescence, should prove, perchance, the greatest beauty, as the tear of the pearl; beautiful scarlet sins they may be. Through our temptations, aye, and our falls, our virtues appear. As in many a character, many a poet, we see that beauty exhibited in a gall which was meant to have bloomed in a flower, unchecked. Such, however, is the accomplishment of the world.

The poet cherishes his chagrin and sets his sighs to music. This gall is the tree's "Ode to Dejection." How oft it chanches that the apparent fruit of a shrub, its apple, is merely a gall or blight! How many men, meeting with some blast in the moist, growing days of their youth, so that what should have been a sweet and palatable fruit in them becomes a mere puff and excrescence, say that they have experienced religion! Their fruit is a gall, a puff, an excrescence, for want of moderation and continence. So many plants never ripen their fruit. . . .

The news of the explosion of the powder mills was not only carried seaward by the cloud which its smoke made, but more effectually, though more slowly, by the fragments which were floated thither by the river. M—— yesterday showed me quite a pile of fragments and short pieces of large timber, still black with powder, which he had saved as they were drifting by. . . . Some, no doubt, were carried down to the Merrimack, and by the Merrimack to the ocean, till, perchance, they got into the Gulf Stream and were cast upon the coast of Norway, covered with barnacles, — or who can tell on what more distant strand? — still bearing traces of burnt powder, still capable of telling how and where they were launched, to those who can read their signs. Mingling with wrecks of vessels, which told a

different tale, this wreck of a powder-mill was cast up on some outlandish strand, and went to swell the pile of drift-wood — collected by some native — shouldered by whales, alighted on at first by the musk-rat and the peet-weet, and finally, perhaps, by the stormy petrel and the beach birds. It is long before nature forgets it. How slowly the ruins are being dispersed. . . .

I am as white as a miller — a rye-miller, at least — with the lint from the young leaves and twigs. The tufts of pinks on the side of the peak by the pond grow raying out from a centre, somewhat like a cyme, on the warm, dry side hill, — some a lighter, some a richer and darker shade of pink. With what a variety of colors we are entertained! Yet most colors are rare or in small doses, presented to us as a condiment or spice; much of green, blue, black, and white, but of yellow and the different shades of red, far less. The eyes feast on the colors of flowers as on tidbits.

I hear now, at five o'clock, a farmer's horn calling the hands in from the field to an early tea. Heard afar by the walker, over the woods, at this hour, or at noon, bursting upon the stillness of the air, putting life into some portion of the horizon, this is one of the most suggestive and pleasing of the country sounds produced by man. I know not how far it is peculiar to New

England or the United States. I hear two or three prolonged blasts, as I am walking along, some sultry noon, in the midst of the still woods, — a sound which I know to be produced by human breath, the most sonorous parts of which alone reach me ; and I see in my mind's eye the hired men and master dropping the implements of their labor in the field, and wending their way with a sober satisfaction toward the house. I see the well-sweep rise and fall. I see the preparatory ablutions, and the table laden with the smoking meal. It is a significant hum in a distant part of the hive. . . .

How much lupine is now in full bloom on bare sandy brows or promontories, running into meadows where the sod is half worn away and the sand exposed ! The geraniums are now getting to be common. *Hieracium venosum* just out on this peak, and the snapdragon catchfly is here, abundantly in blossom a little after five P. M., — a pretty little flower, the petals dull crimson beneath or varnished mahogany color, and rose-tinted white within or above. It closed on my way home, but opened again in water in the evening. Its opening in the night chiefly is a fact which interests and piques me. Do any insects visit it then ? — Lambkill just beginning, — the very earliest. . . . New, bright, glossy, light-green leaves of the umbelled wintergreen

are shooting on this hill-side, but the old leaves are particularly glossy and shining, as if varnished and not yet dry, or most highly polished. Did they look thus in the winter? I do not know any leaf so wet-glossy.

While walking up this hill-side I disturbed a night-hawk eight or ten feet from me, which went half fluttering, half hopping, the mottled creature, like a winged toad (as Nuttall says the French of Louisiana call it) down the hill as far as I could see. Without moving I looked about and saw its two eggs on the bare ground on a slight shelf of the hill, on the dead pine needles and sand, without any cavity or nest whatever; very obvious when once you had detected them, but not easily detected from their color, a coarse gray, formed of white spotted with bluish or slaty brown or amber, — a stone-granite color, like the places it selects. I advanced and put my hand on them, and while I stooped, seeing a shadow on the ground, looked up and saw the bird, which had fluttered down the hill so blind and helpless, circling low and swiftly past over my head, showing the white spot on each wing in true night-hawk fashion. When I had gone a dozen rods it appeared again, higher in the air, with its peculiar limping kind of flight, all the while noiseless, and suddenly descending it dashed at me within ten

feet of my head, like an imp of darkness; then swept away high over the pond, dashing now to this side, now to that, on different tracks, as if, in pursuit of its prey, it had already forgotten its eggs on the earth. I can see how it might easily come to be regarded with superstitious awe. — A cuckoo very plainly heard.

June 1, 1854. Within little more than a fortnight the woods, from bare twigs, have become a sea of verdure, and young shoots have contended with one another in the race. The leaves have unfurled all over the country. Shade is produced, the birds are concealed, their economies go forward uninterruptedly, and a covert is afforded to the animals generally. But thousands of worms and insects are preying on the leaves while they are young and tender. Myriads of little parasols are suddenly spread all the country over to shield the earth and the roots of the trees from parching heat, and they begin to flutter and rustle in the breeze.

From Bare Hill there is a mist on the landscape, giving it a glaucous appearance. Now I see gentlemen and ladies sitting in boats at anchor on the lakes, in the calm afternoons, under parasols, making use of nature. The farmer, hoeing, is wont to look with scorn and pride on a man sitting in a motionless boat a whole half day, but he does not realize that the

object of his own labor is perhaps merely to add another dollar to his heap, nor through what coarseness and inhumanity to his family and servants he often accomplishes this. He has an Irishman or a Canadian working for him by the month, and what, probably, is the lesson he is teaching him by precept and example? Will it make that laborer more of a man? this earth more like heaven?

June 1, 1857. A redwing's nest, four eggs, low in a tuft of sedge in an open meadow. What Champollion can translate the hieroglyphics on these eggs? It is always writing of the same character, though much diversified. While the bird picks up the material and lays this egg, who determines the style of the marking? When you approach, away dashes the dark mother, betraying her nest, and then chatters her anxiety from a neighboring bush, where she is soon joined by the red-shouldered male, who comes scolding over your head, chattering and uttering a sharp "phee-e."

I hear the note of a bobolink concealed in the top of an apple-tree behind me. Though this bird's full strain is ordinarily somewhat trivial, this one appears to be meditating a strain as yet unheard in meadow or orchard. *Paulo majora canamus*. He is just touching the strings of his theorbo, his glassichord, his water organ,

and one or two notes globe themselves and fall in liquid bubbles from his teeming throat. It is as if he touched his harp within a vase of liquid melody, and when he lifted it out the notes fell like bubbles from the trembling strings. Methinks they are the most liquidly sweet and melodious sounds I ever heard. They are as refreshing to my ear as the first distant tinkling and gurgling of a rill to a thirsty man. Oh, never advance farther in your art; never let us hear your full strain, sir! But away he launches, and the meadow is all bespattered with melody. Its notes fall with the apple blossoms in the orchard. The very divinest part of his strain drops from his overflowing breast *singultim*, in globes of melody. It is the foretaste of such strains as never fell on mortal ears, to hear which we should rush to our doors and contribute all that we possess and are. Or it seemed as if in that vase full of melody some notes sphered themselves, and from time to time bubbled up to the surface, and were with difficulty repressed.

June 2, 1853. Half past three A. M. When I awake I hear the low, universal chirping or twittering of the chip-birds, like the bursting head on the surface of the uncorked day. First come, first served. You must taste the first glass of the day's nectar if you would get all

the spirit of it. Its fixed air begins to stir and escape. Also the robin's morning song is heard, as in the spring, — earlier than the notes of most other birds, thus bringing back the spring ; now rarely heard or noticed in the course of the day.

Four A. M. To Nashawtuck. I go to the river in a fog — through which I cannot see more than a dozen rods — three or four times as deep as the houses. As I row down the stream, the dark, dim outlines of the trees on the banks appear coming to meet me on the one hand, while they retreat and are soon concealed in it on the other. My strokes soon bring them behind me. The birds are wide awake, as if knowing that this fog presages a fair day. I ascend Nashawtuck from the north side. I am aware that I yield to the same influence which inspires the birds and the cockerels whose hoarse courage I hear now vaunted. I would crow like chanticleer in the morning, with all the lustiness that the new day imparts, without thinking of the evening, when I and all of us shall go to roost ; with all the humility of the cock that takes his perch upon the highest rail and wakes the country with his clarion brag. Shall not men be inspired as much as cockerels ? My feet are soon wet with fog. It is indeed a vast dew. Are not the clouds another kind of dew ?

Cool nights produce them. Now I have reached the hill-top above the fog at a quarter to five, about sunrise, and all around me is a sea of fog, level and white, reaching nearly to the top of this hill, only the tops of a few high hills appearing as distant islands in the main. Wachusetts is a more distant and larger island, an Atlantis in the west; there is hardly one to touch at between me and it. It is just like the clouds beneath you as seen from a mountain. It is a perfect level in some directions, cutting the hills near their summits with a geometrical line, but puffed up here and there, and more and more toward the east, by the influence of the sun. An early freight train is heard, not seen, rushing through the town beneath it. You can get here the impression which the ocean makes, without ever going to the shore. The sea-shore exhibits nothing more grand, or on a larger scale. How grand where it rolls off over Ball's Hill, like a glorious ocean after a storm, just lit by the rising sun. It is as boundless as the view from the highlands of Cape Cod. These are exaggerated billows, the ocean on a larger scale, the sea after some tremendous and unheard-of storm, for the actual sea never appears so tossed up and universally white with foam and spray as this, now, far in the northeastern horizon, where mountain billows are

breaking on some hidden reef or bank. It is tossed up toward the sun and by it into the most boisterous of seas, which no craft, no ocean steamer, is vast enough to sail on. Meanwhile, my hands are numb with cold, and my feet ache with it. Now, at quarter past five, before this southwest wind, it is already grown thin as gossamer in that direction, and woods and houses are seen through it, while it is heaped up toward the sun, and finally becomes so thick there that for a short time it appears in one place a dark, low cloud, such as else can only be seen from mountains; and now long, dark ridges of wood appear through it, and now the sun reflected from the river makes a bright glow in the fog, and now, at half past five, I see the green surface of the meadows, and the water through the trees sparkling with bright reflections. Men will go further and pay more to see a tawdry picture on canvas, a poor, painted scene, than to behold the fairest or grandest scene that nature ever displays in their immediate vicinity, although they may never have seen it in their lives. . . .

Cherry birds are the only ones I see in flocks now. I can tell them afar by their peculiar fine Spring-y note. . . .

Four P. M. To Conantum. . . . Arethusas are abundant in what I may call Arethusa

Meadow. They are the more striking for growing in such green localities in meadows where the brilliant purple, more or less red, contrasts with the green grass. Found four perfect arrowheads, and one imperfect, in the potato field just plowed up for the first time that I remember, at the Hubbard bathing place. . . .

Clintonia borealis a day or two. Its beauty at present consists chiefly in its commonly three very handsome, rich, clear, dark-green leaves, which Bigelow describes truly as "more than half a foot long, oblanceolate, smooth, and shining." They are perfect in form and color, broadly oblanceolate, with a deep channel down the middle, uninjured by insects, arching over from a centre at the ground; and from their midst rises the scape, a foot high, with one or more umbels of "green, bell-shaped flowers," — yellowish-green, nodding or bent downward, but without fragrance. In fact, the plant is all green, both leaves and corolla. The leaves alone—and many have no scape—would detain the walker. Its berries are its flower. A single plant is a great ornament in a vase, from the beauty of its form and the rich, unspotted green of its leaves.

The sorrel now reddens the fields far and wide. As I look over the fields thus reddened in extensive patches, now deeper, now passing

into green, and think of the season now in its prime and heyday, it looks as if it were the blood mantling in the cheek of the beautiful year, — the rosy cheek of its health, its rude June health. The *medeola* has been out a day or two, apparently, — another green flower. . . .

June 2, 1854. P. M. Up Assabet to Castilleja and Anursnack. While waiting for —— and S—— I look now from the yard to the waving and slightly glaucous-tinged June meadows, edged by the cool shade of shrubs and trees, — a waving shore of shady bays and promontories, yet different from the August shades. It is beautiful and Elysian. The air has now begun to be filled with a bluish haze. These virgin shades of the year, when everything is tender, fresh, and green, how full of promise! — promising bowers of shade in which heroes may repose themselves. I would fain be present at the birth of shadow. It takes place with the first expansion of the leaves. . . . The black willows are already beautiful, and the hemlocks with their bead-work of new green. Are these not king-bird-days, — these clearer first June days, full of light, when this aerial, twittering bird flutters from willow to willow, and swings on the twigs, showing his white-edged tail? The *Azalea nudiflora* is about done, or there was apparently little of it. — I see some breams'

necks near my old bathing place above the stone heaps, with sharp, yellow, sandy edges, like a milk pan from within. . . . Also there are three or four small stone heaps formed. . . .

The painted-cup meadow is all lit up with ferns on its springy slopes. The handsome flowering fern, now rapidly expanding and fruiting at the same time, colors these moist slopes afar with its now commonly reddish fronds; and then there are the interrupted and the cinnamon ferns in very handsome and regular tufts, and the brakes standing singly, and more backward. . . .

June 2, 1855. From that cocoon of the *Attacus cecropia* which I found — I think it was on the 24th of May — came out this forenoon a splendid moth. I had pinned the cocoon to the sash at the upper part of my window, and quite forgotten it. About the middle of the forenoon S—— came in, and exclaimed that there was a moth on my window. My *Attacus cecropia* had come out and dropped down to the window-sill, where it hung on the side of a slipper, to let its wings hang down and develop themselves. At first the wings were not only not unfolded laterally, but not longitudinally, the thinner ends of the foremost ones for perhaps three fourths of an inch being very feeble, and occupying very little space. It was surprising to see the creature unfold and expand before our eyes, the

wings gradually elongating, as it were, by their own gravity, and from time to time the insect assisting this operation by a slight shake. It was wonderful how it waxed and grew, revealing some new beauty every fifteen minutes, which I called S—— to see, but never losing its hold on the shoe. It looked like a young emperor just donning the most splendid ermine robes, the wings every moment acquiring greater expansion, and their at first wrinkled edge becoming more tense. At first, they appeared double, one within the other. But at last it advanced so far as to spread its wings completely, but feebly, when we approached. This process occupied several hours. It continued to hang to the shoe, with its wings ordinarily closed erect behind its back, the rest of the day, and at dusk, when apparently it was waving them preparatory to its evening flight, I gave it ether, and so saved it in a perfect state. As it lies, not outspread to the utmost, it is five and nine tenths inches by two and one fourth. . . .

The *Azalea nudiflora* now in its prime. What splendid masses of pink, with a few glaucous green leaves sprinkled here and there, — just enough for contrast !

June 2, 1858. Half past eight A. M. Start for Monadnock. Between Shirley Village and Lunenburg I notice, in a meadow on the right

hand, close to the railroad, the *Kalmia glauca* in bloom, as we are whirled past. Arrived at Troy station at five minutes past eleven, and shouldered our knapsacks, steering northeast to the mountain, its top some four miles off. It is a pleasant, hilly road, leading past a few farm-houses, where you already begin to sniff the mountain or at least up-country air. Almost without interruption we had the mountain in sight before us, its sublime gray mass, that antique, brownish-gray, Ararat color. Probably these crests of the earth are for the most part of one color in all lands, — that gray color of antiquity which nature loves, the color of unpainted wood, weather stain, time stain ; not glaring nor gaudy ; the color of all roofs, the color of all things that endure, the color that wears well ; color of Egyptian ruins, of mummies, and all antiquity, baked in the sun, done brown, — not scarlet, like the crest of the bragging cock, but that hard, enduring gray, a terrene sky color, solidified air with a tinge of earth.

We left the road at a school-house, and, crossing a meadow, began to ascend gently through very rocky pastures. . . . The neighboring hills began to sink, and entering the wood we soon passed Fassett's shanty, he so busily at work inside that he did not see us, and we took our dinner by the rocky brookside in the woods just

above. A dozen people passed us early in the afternoon while we sat there, — men and women on their way down from the summit, this suddenly very pleasant day after a lowering one, having attracted them. . . .

Having risen above the dwarfish woods (in which mountain ash was very common) which reached higher up along the ravine we had traversed than elsewhere, and nearly all the visitors having descended, we proceeded to find a place for and to prepare our camp at mid P. M. We wished it to be near water, out of the way of the wind — which was northwest — and of the path, and also near to spruce-trees, for a bed. There is a good place, if you would be near the top, within a stone's-throw of it, on the north side, under some spruce-trees. We chose a sunken yard in a rocky plateau on the southeast side of the mountain, perhaps half a mile from the summit by the path, a rod and a half wide by many more in length, with a mossy and bushy floor about five or six feet beneath the general level, where a dozen black spruce-trees grew, though the surrounding rock was generally bare. There was a pretty good spring within a dozen rods, and the western wall shelved over a foot or two. We slanted two scraggy spruce-trees, long since bleached, from the western wall, and, cutting many spruce boughs with our knives, made

a thick bed and walls on the two sides, to keep out the wind. Then, putting several poles transversely across our two rafters, we covered them with a thick roof of spruce twigs, like shingles. The spruce, though harsh for a bed, was close at hand, we cutting away one tree to make room. We crawled under the low eaves of this roof, about eighteen inches high, and our extremities projected about a foot.

Having left our packs here, and made all ready for the night, we went up to the summit to see the sun set. Our path lay through a couple of small swamps, and then up the rocks. Forty or fifty rods below the very apex, or quite on the top of the mountain, I saw a little bird flit from beneath a rock close by the path, where there were only a very few scattered dwarf black spruces about, and looking I found a nest with three eggs. It was the *Fringilla hiemalis*, which soon disappeared around a projecting rock. The nest was sunk in the ground by the side of a tuft of grass, and was pretty deep, made of much fine, dry grass or sedge (?). The eggs were three, of a regular oval form, faint bluish-white, sprinkled with fine pale-brown dots, in two of the three condensed into a ring about the larger end. They had just begun to develop. The nest and tuft were covered by a projecting rock. Brewer says that only one nest is known to naturalists

We saw many of these birds flitting about the summit, perched on the rocks and the dwarf spruces, and disappearing behind the rocks. It is the prevailing bird now on the summit. They are commonly said to go to the fur countries to breed, though Wilson says that some breed in the Alleghanies. The New York Reports make them breed in the Catskills and some other mountains of that State. This was a quite interesting discovery. They probably are never seen in the surrounding low grounds at this season. The ancestors of this bird had evidently perceived in their flight northward that here was a small piece of arctic region containing all the conditions they require, coolness and suitable food, etc., etc., and so for how long have builded here. For ages they have made their home here with the *Arenaria Groenlandica* and *Potentilla tridentata*. They discerned arctic isles sprinkled in our southern sky. I did not see any of them below the rocky and generally bare portion of the mountain. It finds here the same conditions as in the north of Maine and in the fur countries, Labrador mosses, etc. Now that the season is advanced, migrating birds have gone to the extreme north or to the mountain tops. By its color it harmonized with the gray and brownish-gray rocks. We felt that we were so much nearer to perennial spring and winter. . . .

We heard the hylodes peeping from a rain-water pool, a little below the summit, toward night. As it was quite hazy we could not see the shadow of the mountain well, and so returned just before sunset to our camp. We lost the path coming down, for nothing is easier than to lose your way here, where so little trail is left upon the rocks, and the different rocks and ravines are so much alike. Perhaps no other equal area is so bewildering in this respect as a rocky mountain summit, though it has so conspicuous a central point. Notwithstanding the newspaper and egg-shell left by visitors, these parts of nature are still peculiarly unhandseled and untracked. The natural terraces of rock are the steps of this temple, and it is the same whether it rises above the desert or a New England village. Even the inscribed rocks are as solemn as most ancient grave-stones, and nature reclaims them with bog and lichens. These sculptors seemed to me to court such alliance with the grave as they who put their names over tombstones along the highway. One, who was probably a blacksmith, had sculptured the emblems of his craft, an anvil and hammer, beneath his name. Apparently, a part of the regular outfit of mountain climbers is a hammer and cold chisel, and perhaps they allow themselves a supply of garlic also. But no Old Mortality will

ever be caught renewing their epitaphs. It reminds one what kind of steep do climb the false pretenders to fame, whose chief exploit is the carriage of the tools with which to inscribe their names. For speaking epitaphs they are, and the mere name is a sufficient revelation of the character. They are all of one trade, — stone-cutters, defacers of mountain tops. “Charles and Lizzie!” Charles carried the sledge-hammer, and Lizzie the cold chisel. Some have carried up a paint pot, and painted their names on the rocks.

We returned to our camp, and got our tea in our sunken yard. While one went for water to the spring, the other kindled a fire. The whole rocky part of the mountain, except the extreme summit, is strewn with the relics of spruce-trees a dozen or fifteen feet long, and long since dead and bleached, so that there is plenty of dry fuel at hand. We sat out on the brink of the rocky plateau, near our camp, taking our tea in the twilight, and found it quite dry and warm there, though you would not have thought of sitting out at evening in the surrounding valleys. I have often perceived the warm air high on the sides of hills, while the valleys were filled with a cold, damp night-air, as with water, and here the air was warmer and drier the greater part of the night. We perceived no dew there this or the next night. This was our parlor and supper-

room ; in another direction was our wash-room. The chewink sang before night, and this, as I have before observed, is a very common bird on mountain tops ; the wood-thrush sang, too, indefinitely far or near, a little more distant and unseen, as great poets are. It seems to love a cool atmosphere, and sometimes lingers quite late with us. Early in the evening the night-hawks were heard to squeak and boom over these bare gray rocks, and such was our serenade at first as we lay on our spruce bed. We were left alone with the night-hawks. These withdrawn, bare rocks must be a very suitable place for them to lay their eggs, and their dry and unmusical, yet supra-mundane and spirit-like, voices and sounds gave fit expression to the rocky mountain solitude. It struck the very key-note of that stern, gray, and barren region. It was a thrumming of the mountain's rocky chords ; strains from the music of chaos, such as were heard when the earth was rent and these rocks heaved up. Thus they went squeaking and booming while we were courting the first access of sleep, and I could imagine their dainty, limping flight, inclining over the kindred rocks with a spot of white quartz in their wings. No sound could be more in harmony with that scenery. Though common below, it seemed peculiarly proper here. But ere long the night-hawks are stilled, and we hear

only the sound of our companion's breathing, or of a bug in our spruce roof. I thought I heard once, faintly, the barking of a dog far down under the mountain.

A little after one A. M. I woke and found that the moon had risen, and heard some little bird near by sing a short strain of welcome to it, song-sparrow-like. Before dawn the night-hawks commenced their sounds again, which were as good as a clock to us, telling how the night got on. At length, by three o'clock, June 3d, the signs of dawn appear, and soon we hear the robin and the *Fringilla hiemalis* (its prolonged jingle as it sat on the top of a spruce), the chewink, and the wood-thrush. Whether you have slept soundly or not, it is not easy to lie abed under these circumstances, and we rose at half past three, in order to see the sun rise from the top and get our breakfast there. It was still hazy, and we did not see the shadow of the mountain until it was comparatively short, nor did we get the most distant views, as of the Green and White mountains, while we were there. . . .

We concluded to explore the whole rocky part of the mountain in this wise: to saunter slowly around it at about the height and distance from the summit, of our camp, or say half a mile, more or less, first going north, and returning by

the western semicircle, and then exploring the east side, completing the circle, and returning over the summit at night. . . .

During this walk, in looking toward the summit, I first observed that its steep, angular projections and the brows of the rocks were the parts chiefly covered with dark brown lichens, *umbilicaria*, etc., as if they were to grow on the ridge and slopes of a man's nose only. It was the steepest and most exposed parts of the high rocks alone on which they grew, where you would think it most difficult for them to cling. They also covered the more rounded brows on the sides of the mountain, especially on the east side, where they were very dense, fine, crisp, and firm, like a sort of shagreen, giving a firm hold to the feet where it was needed. It was these that gave that Ararat brown color of antiquity to these portions of the mountain, which a few miles distant could not be accounted for, compared with the more prevalent gray. From the sky blue you pass through the misty gray of the rocks to this darker and more terrene color. The temples of the mountain are covered with lichens, which color it for miles. . . .

We had thus made a pretty complete survey of the top of the mountain. It is a very unique walk, and would be almost equally interesting to take if it were not elevated above the surround.

ing valleys. It often reminded me of my walks on the beach, and suggested how much both depend for their sublimity on solitude and dreariness. In both cases we feel the presence of some vast, titanic power. The rocks and valleys and bogs and rain pools of the mountain are so wild and unfamiliar still that you do not recognize the one you left fifteen minutes before. This rocky region, forming what you may call the top of the mountain, must be more than two miles long by one wide in the middle, and you would need to ramble round it many times before it would begin to be familiar. . . .

We proceeded to get our tea on the summit, in the very place where I had made my bed for a night some fifteen years before. . . . It was interesting to watch from that height the shadows of fair-weather clouds passing over the landscape. You could hardly distinguish them from forests. It reminded me of similar shadows seen on the sea from the high bank of Cape Cod beach. There the perfect equality of the sea atoned for the comparatively slight elevation of the bank. . . . In the valley or on the plain you do not commonly notice the shadow of a cloud unless you are in it, but on a mountain top, or on a lower elevation in a plane country or by the sea-side, the shadows of clouds flitting over the landscape are a never-failing source of

amusement. It is commonly easy enough to refer a shadow to its cloud, since in one direction its form is perceived with sufficient accuracy. Yet I was surprised to observe that a long, straggling, downy cumulus, extending north and south a few miles east of us, when the sun was perhaps an hour high, cast its shadow along the base of the Peterboro hills, and did not fall on the other side, as I should have expected. It proved the clouds not so high as I had supposed. . . . It was pleasant enough to see one man's farm in the shadow of a cloud, which perhaps he thought covered all the Northern States, while his neighbor's farm was in sunshine.

June 4th. At six A. M. we began to descend. As you are leaving a mountain and looking back at it from time to time, it is interesting to see how it gradually gathers up its slopes and spurs to itself into a regular whole, and makes a new and total impression.

June 2, 1859. Found, within three rods of Flint's Pond, a rose-breasted grossbeak's nest, and one fresh egg (three on the 4th). It was in a thicket where there was much catbriar, in a high blueberry bush, some five feet from the ground, in the forks of the bush, and of very loose construction, being made of the dead gray extremities of the catbriar with its tendrils (and

some of them had dropped on the ground beneath), and this was lined, lined merely, with fine brown stems of weeds, like pinweeds, without any leaves or anything else, a slight nest on the whole. Saw the birds. The male uttered a very peculiar sharp clicking or squeaking note of alarm while I was near the nest. The egg is thickly spotted with reddish brown on a pale blue ground (not white ground, as Buonaparte and the New York ornithologist says), like a hermit thrush's, but rounder, very delicate.

June 2, 1860. A boy brought me yesterday a nest with two Maryland yellow-throat's eggs and two cow-bird's eggs in it, and said that they were all found together.

You see now in suitable shallow and warm places, where there is a sandy bottom, the nests of the bream begun, circular hollows recently excavated, weeds, *confervæ*, and other rubbish neatly removed, and many whitish root fibres of weeds left bare and exposed.

8 P. M. Up Assabet. Bats go over, and a king-bird very late. . . . Ever and anon we hear the stake-driver from a distance. There is a more distinct sound from animals than by day, and an occasional bull-frog's trump is heard. Turning the island, I hear a very faint and slight screwing or working sound once, and suspect a screech owl, which I afterwards see on an oak. I

soon hear its mournful scream, probably to its mate ; not loud now, but though within thirty or thirty-two rods, sounding a mile off. I hear it louder from my bed at night.

June 3, 1838. Walden.

“ True, our converse a stranger is to speech ;
Only the practised ear can catch the surging words
That break and die upon thy pebbled lips.
Thy flow of thought is noiseless as the lapse of thy own
waters,

Wafted as is the morning mist up from thy surface,
So that the passive soul doth breathe it in,
And is infected with the truth thou wouldst express.”

June 3, 1853. P. M. To Anursnack. By way of the *Linnæa*, which I find is not yet out. That thick pine wood is full of birds. . . . The painted cup is in its prime. It reddens the meadow, Painted Cup Meadow. It is a splendid show of brilliant scarlet, the color of the cardinal flower and surpassing it in mass and profusion. They first appear on the side of the hill, on dryer ground, half a dozen inches high, and the color is most striking then, when it is most rare and precious ; but they now cover the meadow mingled with buttercups, etc., and many are more than eight inches high. I do not like the name. It does not remind me of a cup, rather of a flame when it first appears. It might be called flame flower, or scarlet tip. Here is a large meadow full of it, and yet very

few in the town have ever seen it. It is startling to see a leaf thus brilliantly painted, as if its tip were dipped into some scarlet tincture, surpassing most flowers in intensity of color.

Seen from Anursnack the woods now appear full-leaved, smooth green, no longer hoary, and the pines a dark mulberry, not green. But you are still covered with lint as you go through the copses. Summer begins when the hoariness disappears from the forest as you look down on it, and gives place thus to smooth green, full and universal.

The song of the robin and the chirp (?) of the chip-bird now begin prominently to usher in and to conclude the day. The robin's song seems not so loud as in the early spring, perhaps because there are so many other sounds at present.

June 3, 1854. 9 A. M. To Fair Haven. Going up Fair Haven Hill, the blossoms of the huckleberries and blueberries imparted a sweet scent to the whole hillside. . . . On the pond played a long time with the bubbles which we made with our paddles on the smooth, perhaps unctuous surface, in which little hemispherical cases we saw ourselves and boat, small, black, and distinct, with a fainter reflection on the opposite side of the bubble (head to head). These lasted sometimes a minute before they burst. They reminded me more of Italy than of New Eng-

land. . . . Thought how many times other similar bubbles, which had now burst, had reflected here the Indian, his canoe and paddle, with the same faithfulness that they now image me and my boat.

June 3, 1856. While running a line in the woods close to the water on the southwest side of Loring's Pond, I observed a chickadee sitting quietly within a few feet. Suspecting a nest, I looked and found it in a small, hollow maple stump, which was about five inches in diameter and two feet high. I looked down about a foot, and could just discern the eggs. Breaking off a little, I managed to get my hand in and took out some eggs. There were seven, making by their number an unusual figure, as they lay in the nest, a sort of egg rosette, a circle around, with one or more in the middle. In the meanwhile the bird sat silent, though rather restless, within three feet. The nest was very thick and warm, of average depth, and made of the bluish slate rabbit's (?) fur. The eggs were a perfect oval, five-eighths of an inch long, white, with small reddish-brown or rusty spots, especially about larger end, partly developed. The bird sat on the remaining eggs next day. I called off the boy in another direction that he might not find it.

Picked up a young wood tortoise about an

inch and a half long, but very orbicular. Its scales very distinct, and, as usual, very finely and distinctly sculptured ; but there was no orange on it, only buff or leather color on the sides beneath. So the one of similar rounded form and size, and with distinct scales, but faint yellow spots on back, must have been a young spotted turtle, I think, after all.

June 3, 1857. P. M. To White Cedar Swamp. . . . I see a branch of *Salix lucida* which has been broken off, probably by the ice in the winter, and come down from far up stream, and lodged, butt downward, amid some bushes, where it has put forth pink fibres from the butt end in the water, and is growing vigorously, though not rooted in the bottom. Thus detained, it begins to sprout and send its pink fibres down to the mud, and finally the water, getting down to the summer level, leaves it rooted in the bank. . . .

The pitch pine at Hemlocks is in bloom. The sterile flowers are yellowish, while those of the *Pinus resinosa* are dark purple. As usual, when I jar them, the pollen rises in a little cloud about the pistillate flowers and the tops of the twigs, there being a little wind. . . .

I have several friends and acquaintances who are very good companions in the house, or for an afternoon walk, but whom I cannot make up

my mind to make a longer excursion with, for I discover all at once that they are too gentlemanly in manners, dress, and all their habits. I see in my mind's eye that they wear black coats, considerable starched linen, glossy boots and shoes, and it is out of the question. It is a great disadvantage for a traveler to be a gentleman of this kind, he is so ill-treated, only a prey to landlords. It would be too much of a circumstance to enter a strange town or house with such a companion. You could not travel incognito. You might get into the papers. You should travel as a common man. If such a one were to set out to make a walking journey, he would betray himself at every step. Every one would see that he was trying an experiment, as plainly as they see that a lame man is lame by his limping. The natives would bow to him, other gentlemen would invite him to ride, conductors would warn him that this was the second-class car, and many would take him for a clergyman, and so he would be continually pestered and balked and run upon. He could not see the natives at all. Instead of going in quietly and sitting by the kitchen fire, he would be shown into a cold parlor, there to confront a fire-board and excite a commotion in a whole family. The women would scatter at his approach, and the husbands and sons would go right off to hunt up

their black coats, for they all have them. They are as cheap as dirt. He would go trailing his limbs along the highways, mere bait for corpulent innholders, as a frog's leg is trolled along a stream to catch pickerel, and his part of the profits would be the frog's. No, you must be a common man, or at least travel as one, and then nobody will know you are there or have been there. I could not undertake a simple pedestrian excursion with one of these, because to enter a village or a hotel or a private house with such a one would be too great a circumstance, would create too great a stir. You would not go half as far with the same means, for the price of board and lodging would rise everywhere; so much you have to pay for wearing that kind of coat. Not that the difference is in the coat at all, for the character of the scurf is determined by that of the true liber beneath. Innkeepers, stablers, conductors, clergymen, know a true way-faring man at first sight, and let him alone. It is of no use to shove your gaiter shoes a mile further than usual. Sometimes it is mere shiftlessness or want of originality; *the clothes wear them*. Sometimes it is egoism that cannot afford to be treated like a common man; *they wear the clothes*. They wish to be at least fully appreciated by every stage-driver and school-boy. They would like well enough to see a new place,

perhaps, but then they would like to be regarded as important public personages. They would consider it a misfortune if their names were left out of the published list of passengers, because they came in the steerage, an obscurity from which they might never emerge.

June 3, 1860. These are the clear breezy days of early June, when the leaves are young and few, and the sorrel not yet in its prime. Perceive the meadow fragrance. . . . The roads are strewn with red maple seed. The pine shoots have grown generally from three to six inches, and begin to make a distinct impression, even at some distance, of white and brown above their dark green. The foliage of deciduous trees is still rather yellow-green than green. Tree-toads heard. There are various sweet scents in the air now. Especially as I go along an arbor-vitæ hedge, I perceive a very distinct fragrance like strawberries from it.

June 4, 1852. The birds sing at dawn. What sounds to be awakened by! If only our sleep, our dreams are such as to harmonize with the song, the warbling of the birds ushering in the day. They appear comparatively silent an hour or two later.

The dandelions are almost all gone to seed, and children may now see if "your mother wants you." . . . Lupines in prime. The Car-

ada snapdragon, that little blue flower that lasts so long, grows with the lupines under Fair Haven. The early chickweed? with the star-shaped flower, cerastium? is common in fields now.

June 4, 1853. The date of the introduction of the *Rhododendron maximum* into Concord is worth preserving, May 16, 1853. They were small plants one to four feet high, some with large flower buds, twenty-five cents apiece, and I noticed the next day one or more in every front yard on each side of the street, and the inhabitants out watering them. Said to be the most splendid native flower in Massachusetts. In a swamp in Medfield. I hear to-day that one in town has blossomed. . . . The clintonia is abundant in Hubbard's shady swamp, along by the foot of the hill, and in its prime. Look there for its berries. Commonly four leaves there with an obtuse point, — the lady's slipper leaf not so rich, dark green and smooth, having several channels. The bull-frog now begins to be heard at night regularly, has taken the place of the hylodes.

Looked over the earliest town records at the clerk's office this evening, the old book containing grants of land. Am surprised to find such names as "Wallden Pond" and "Fair Haven" as early as 1653, and apparently '52; also under

the first date, at least, "2d Division," the rivers as "North and South" rivers (not Assabet at that date), "Swamp Bridge," apparently on Back road, "Goose Pond," "Mr. Flint's Pond," "Nutt Meadow," "Willow Swamp," "Spruce Swamp," etc., etc. . . . It is pleasing to read these evergreen wilderness names, now, perchance, cleared fields and meadows, said to be redeemed. The 2d Division appears to have been a very large tract between the two rivers.

June 4, 1854. 8 A. M. Up Assabet with B—— and B——.

These warm and dry days which put Spring far behind, the sound of the crickets at noon has a new value and significance, so serene and cool. It is the *iced* cream of song. It is modulated shade.

I see now, here and there, deep furrows in the sandy bottom, two or three inches wide, leading from the middle of the river toward the side, and a clam on its edge at the end of each. There are distinct white lines. Plainly, then, about these times the clams are coming up to the shore, and I have caught them in the act.

P. M. To Walden. Now is the time to observe the leaves, so fair in color and so perfect in form. I stood over a sprig of chokeberry with fair and perfect glossy, green, obovate and serrate leaves in the woods this P. M., as if it

were a rare flower. Now the various forms of oak leaves in sproutlands, wet-glossy, as if newly painted green and varnished, attract me. The chinquapin and black shrub oaks have such leaves as I fancy crowns were made of. And in the washing breeze the lighter under-sides begin to show, and a new light is flashed upon the year, lighting up and enlivening the landscape. Perhaps, on the whole, as most of the undersides are of a glaucous hue, they add to the glaucous mistiness of the atmosphere which now has begun to prevail. The mountains are hidden. The first drought may be beginning. The dust is powdery in the street, and we do not always have dew in the night.

In some cases Fame is perpetually false and unjust. Or rather I should say that she never recognizes the simple heroism of an action, but only as connected with its apparent consequence. She praises the interested energy of the Boston Tea Party, but will be comparatively silent about the more bloody and disinterestedly heroic attack on the Boston Court House, simply because the latter was unsuccessful. Fame is not just. She never finely or discriminatingly praises, but coarsely hurrahs. The truest acts of heroism never reach her ear, are never published by her trumpet.

June 4, 1855. P. M. To Hubbard's Close

. . . White clover out probably some days ; also red, as long. It has just cleared off after this first rain of consequence for a long time, and now I observe the shadows of massive clouds still floating here and there in the peculiarly blue sky. These dark shadows on field and wood are the more remarkable by contrast to the light, yellow-green foliage, and where they rest on evergreens, they are doubly dark, like dark rings about the eyes of June. Great white-bosomed clouds, darker beneath, float through the clearest sky, and are seen against its delicious blue, such a sky as we have not had before. This is after the first important rain at this season. The song of birds is more lively and seems to have a new character ; a new season has commenced. In the woods I hear the tanager, the chewink, and the redeye. . It is fairly summer, and mosquitoes begin to sting in earnest. . . . There are now many potentillas ascendant, and the *Erigeron bellidifolium* I see sixteen inches high and quite handsome. . . . Now the crimson velvety leaves of the black oak, showing also a crimson edge on the downy undersides, are beautiful as a flower, and the more salmon-colored white oak.

The *Linnæa borealis* has grown an inch, but are not the flowers winter-killed ? I see dead and blackened flower-buds. Perhaps it should have opened before.

June 4, 1857. P. M. To Bare Hill. . . .
One thing that chiefly distinguishes this season from three weeks ago is that fine serene undertone or earth-song, as we go by sunny brooks and hillsides, the creak of crickets, which affects our thoughts so favorably, imparting its own serenity. It is time now to bring our philosophy out of doors. Our thoughts pillow themselves unconsciously in the trough of this serene rippling sea of sound. Now first we begin to be peripatetics. No longer our ears can be content with the bald echoing earth, but everywhere recline on the spring-cushion of a cricket's chirp. These rills that ripple from every hillside become at length a universal sea of sound, nourishing our ears when we are most unconscious. . . . In the high pasture behind Jacob Baker's, soon after coming out of the wood, I scare up a baywing. She runs several rods close to the ground through the thin grass, and then lurks behind tussocks, etc. The nest has four eggs, dull pinkish white with brown spots. It is low in the ground, made of stubble lined with white horse-hair.

June 4, 1860. The foliage of the elms over the street is dense and heavy already, comparatively. The black-poll warblers appear to have left, and some others, if not the warblers generally, with this first clear, bright, and warm

peculiarly June weather, immediately after the May rain. About a month ago, after the stormy and cold winds of March and April, and the (in common years) rain and high water, the ducks, etc., left us for the north. Now there is a similar departure of the warblers, on the expansion of the leaves and advent of yet warmer weather. Their season with us, *i. e.*, the season of those that go further, is when the buds are bursting, till the leaves are about expanded, and probably they follow these phenomena northward till they get to their breeding places, flying from tree to tree, *i. e.*, to the next tree north which contains their insect prey. . . .

The clear brightness of June was well represented yesterday by the buttercups (*Ranunculus bulbosus*) along the roadside. Their yellow cups are glossy and varnished within, but not without. Surely there is no reason why the new butter should not be yellow now.

The time has now come when the laborers, having washed and put on their best suits, walk into the fields on the Sabbath, and lie on the ground at rest.

A cat-bird has her nest in our grove. We cast out strips of white cotton cloth, all of which she picked up and used. I saw a bird flying across the street with so long a strip of cloth, or the like, the other day, and so slowly, that at

first I thought it was a little boy's kite, with a long tail. The cat-bird sings less now while its mate is sitting, or may be taking care of her young, and probably this is the case with robins and birds generally.

At the west spring of Fair Haven Hill I cast a bit of wood against a pitch-pine in bloom (perhaps not yet in bloom generally), and I see the yellow pollen dust blown away from it in a faint cloud, distinctly for three rods at least, and gradually rising all the while (rising five or six feet perhaps).

You may say that now, when most trees have fully expanded leaves, and the black ash fairly shows green, that the leafy season has commenced. (I see that I so called it May 27 and 31, 1853.)

June 5, 1850. To-night, after a hot day, I hear the first peculiar summer breathing of the frogs.

The other day, when I walked to Goodman's Hill, it seemed to me that the atmosphere was never so full of fragrance and spicy odors. There is a great variety in the fragrance of the apple blossoms as well as in their tints. Some are quite spicy. The air seemed filled with the odor of ripe strawberries, though it is quite too early for them. The earth was not only fragrant, but sweet and spicy, reminding us of Arabian gales, and what mariners tell of the Spice Islands.

The first of June, when the lady's slipper and the wild pink have come out in sunny places on the hill-sides, then the summer is begun according to the clock of the seasons.

June 5, 1852. The medeola has blossomed in a tumbler. I seem to perceive a pleasant fugacious fragrance from its rather delicate, but inconspicuous, green flower. Its whorls of leaves of two stages are the most remarkable. I do not perceive the smell of the cucumber in its root.

To Harrington's. P. M. The silvery cinquefoil, *Potentilla argentea*, now. A delicate spring yellow, sunny yellow (before the dog-days) flower. None of the fire of autumnal yellows in it. Its silvery leaf is as good as a flower. White weed.

The constant inquiry which Nature puts is, "Are you virtuous? Then you can behold me." Beauty, fragrance, music, sweetness, and joy of all kinds are for the virtuous. That I thought when I heard the telegraph harp to-day.

The *Viola lanceolata* now, instead of the *Viola blanda*. In some places the leaves of the last are grown quite large. The side-saddle flower. The *Thalictrum anemonoides* still. The dwarf cornel by Harrington's road looks like large snow-flakes on the hill-side, it is so thick. It is a neat, geometrical flower, of a pure white, sometimes greenish, or green.

Some poet must sing in praise of the bulbous *Arethusa*.

The lupine is now in its glory. It is the more important, because it occurs in such extensive patches, even an acre or more together, and of such a pleasing variety of colors, purple, pink or lilac, and white, especially with the sun on it, when the transparency of the flower makes its color changeable. It paints a whole hill-side with its blue, making such a field (if not meadow) as Proserpine might have wandered in. Its leaf was made to be covered with dew-drops. I am quite excited by this prospect of blue flowers in clumps, with narrow intervals, such a profusion of the heavenly, the Elysian color, as if these were the Elysian Fields. . . . That is the value of the lupine. The earth is blued with it. Yet a third of a mile distant I do not detect their color on the hill-side. Perchance because it is the color of the air. It is not distinct enough. You may have passed along here a fortnight ago, and the hill-side was comparatively barren, but now you come, and these glorious redeemers appear to have flashed out here all at once. Who plants the seeds of lupines in the barren soil? Who watereth the lupines in the fields?

De Kay of the New York Report says the bream "is of no value as an article of food, but is often caught for amusement." I think it is the sweetest fish in our river.

June 5, 1853. 5 A. M. By river to Nashawtuck. For the most part we are inclined to doubt the prevalence of gross superstition among the civilized ancients ; whether the Greeks, for instance, accepted literally the mythology which we accept as matchless poetry. But we have only to be reminded of the kind of respect paid to the Sabbath as a *holy* day here in New England, and the fears which haunt those who break it, to see that our neighbors are the creatures of an equally gross superstition with the ancients. I am convinced that there is no very important difference between a New Englander's religion and a Roman's. We both worship in the shadow of our sins. They erect the temples for us. Jehovah has no superiority to Jupiter. The New Englander is "a pagan suckled in a creed outworn." Superstition has always reigned. It is absurd to think that these farmers, dressed in their Sunday clothes, proceeding to church, differ essentially in this respect from the Roman peasantry. They have merely changed the name and number of their gods. Men were as good then as they are now, and loved one another as much or as little. . . .

P. M. To Mason's Pasture.

The world is now full of verdure and fragrance, and the air comparatively clear (not yet the constant haze of the dog-days), through

which the distant fields are seen, reddened with sorrel, the meadows wet-green, full of fresh grass, and the trees in their first beautiful, bright, untarnished, and unspotted green. May is the bursting into leaf and early flowering with much coolness and wet, and a few decidedly warm days ushering in summer; June, verdure and growth, with not intolerable, but agreeable heat.

The young pitch pines in Mason's Pasture are a glorious sight now, most of the shoots grown six inches, so soft and blue-green, nearly as wide as high. It is Nature's front yard. The mountain laurel shows its red flower buds, but many shoots have been killed by frost.

There is a tract of pasture and wood land, orchard, and swamp in the north part of the town through which the old Carlisle road runs, which is nearly two miles square, without a single house, and with scarcely any cultivated land, four square miles.

I perceive some black birch leaves with a beautiful crimson kind of sugaring along the furrows of the nerves, giving them a bright crimson color, either a fungus or the deposit of an insect. Seen through a microscope it sparkles like a ruby.

Nature is fair in proportion as the youth is pure. The heavens and the earth are one flower. The earth is the calyx; the heavens, the corolla.

June 5, 1854. 6 P. M. To Cliffs. Now, just before sundown, a night-hawk is circling imp-like with undulating, irregular flight over the sproutland on the Cliff Hill with an occasional squeak, and showing the spot on his wings. He does not circle away from this place, and I associate him with two gray eggs somewhere on the ground beneath, and a mate there sitting. This squeak and occasional booming is heard in the evening air, while the stillness on the side of the village makes more distinct the increased hum of insects.

I see at a distance a king-bird, or blackbird, pursuing a crow lower down the hill, like a satellite revolving about a black planet. I have come to the hill to see the sun go down, to recover sanity, and put myself again in relation with Nature. I would fain drink a draught of Nature's serenity. Let deep answer to deep. Already I see reddening clouds reflected in the smooth mirror of the river, a delicate tint, far off and elysian, unlike anything in the sky as yet. The ever-greens now look even black by contrast with the sea of fresh and light green foliage which surrounds them. Children have been to the cliffs and woven wreaths or chaplets of oak leaves which they have left, unconsciously attracted by the beauty of the leaves now. The sun goes down red and shorn of his beams, a sign of hot

weather, as if the western horizon or the lower stratum of the air were filled with the hot dust of the day. The dust of his chariot eclipses his beams. I love to sit here and look off into the broad deep vale in which the shades of night are beginning to prevail. When the sun has set, the river becomes more white and distinct in the landscape. . . . I return by moonlight.

June 5, 1855. P. M. To Clam Shell by river. . . . I am much interested to see how Nature proceeds to heal the wounds where the turf was stripped off this meadow. There are large patches where nothing remained but pure black mud, nearly level, or with slight hollows like a plate in it. This the sun and air had cracked into irregular polygonal figures, a foot, more or less, in diameter. The whole surface of these patches is now covered with a short, soft, and pretty dense moss-like vegetation springing up and clothing it. The little hollows and the cracks are filled with a very dense growth of reddish grass or sedge, about an inch high, the growth in the cracks making pretty regular figures as in a carpet, while the intermediate spaces are very evenly, but much more thinly covered with minute sarothra and whitish *Gnaphalium uliginosum*. Thus the wound is at once scarred over. Apparently the seeds of that grass were heavier and were washed into the hol-

lows and cracks. It is not likely that the owner has sprinkled seed here.

June 5, 1856. Everywhere now in dry pitch-pine woods stand the red lady's slippers over the red pine leaves on the forest floor, rejoicing in June, with their two broad, curving green leaves (some even in swamps), upholding their rich, striped, drooping sack.

A cuckoo's nest with three light bluish-green eggs, partly developed, short, with rounded ends, nearly of a size; in a black cherry-tree that had been lopped three feet from the ground, amid the thick sprouts; of twigs, lined with *green* leaves, pine needles, etc., and edged with some dry, branchy weeds. The bird stole off silently at first.

[*June 10.* The cuckoo of June 5 has deserted her nest, and I find the fragments of eggshells in it; probably because I found it.]

June 5, 1857. I am interested in each contemporary plant in my vicinity, and have attained to a certain acquaintance with the larger ones. They are cohabitants with me of this part of the planet, and they bear familiar names. Yet how essentially wild they are, as wild really as those strange fossil plants whose impression I see on my coal. Yet I can imagine that some race gathered those too with as much admiration and knew them as intimately as I do these,

that even they served for a language of the sentiments. *Stigmariæ* stood for a human sentiment in that race's flower language. Chickweed or a pine-tree is but little less wild. I assume to be acquainted with these, but what ages between me and the tree whose shade I enjoy. It is as if it stood substantially in a remote geological period.

June 5, 1860. . . . When I open my window at night, I hear the peeping of the hylodes distinctly through the rather cool rain (as also some the next A. M.), but not of toads; more hylodes than in the late very warm evenings when the toads were heard most numerously. The hylodes evidently love the cooler nights of spring. The toads, the warm days and nights of May. Now it requires a cool (and better if wet) night, which will silence the toads, to make the hylodes distinct.

June 6, 1852. First devil's needles in the air, and some smaller bright green ones on flowers. The earliest blueberries are now forming as green berries. The wind already injures the just expanded leaves, tearing them and making them turn black. . . . The side-flowering sandwort, an inconspicuous white flower like a chickweed.

June 6, 1853, 4.30 A. M. To *Linnæa* Woods. The *Linnæa* just out.

Corydalis glauca, a delicate glaucous plant rarely met with, with delicate flesh-colored and yellow flowers, covered with a glaucous bloom, on dry rocky hills. Perhaps it suggests gentility. Set it down as early as middle of May or earlier. . . .

This morning I hear the note of young blue-birds in the air, which have recently taken wing, and the old birds keep up such a warbling and twittering as remind me of spring.

According to S——'s account, she must have seen an emperor moth, "pea-green with something like maple keys for tail," in a lady's hand in Cambridge to-day. So one may have come out of the chrysalid seen May 23d.

P. M. To Conantum by boat. . . . Blue-eyed grass now begins to give that slaty blue tint to meadows.

The deep shadow of Conantum Cliff and of mere prominences in the hills, now at mid-afternoon as we row by, is very interesting. It is the most pleasing contrast of light and shade that I notice. Methinks that in winter a shadow is not attractive. The air is very clear, at least as we look from the river valley, and the landscape all swept and brushed. We seem to see to some depth into the side of Fair Haven Hill.

The side-saddle flowers are now in their prime. There are some very large ones here

abouts, five inches in diameter when you flatten out their petals, like great dull-red roses. Their petals are of a peculiar red, and the upper sides of their calyx leaves, of a shiny leather red or brown red, are agreeable.

A slippery elm, *Ulmus fulva*, on Lee's Cliff, red elm. Put it with the common. It has large rough leaves and straggling branches, a rather small, much-spreading tree, with an appearance between the common elm and ironwood.

The aspect of the dry rocky hills already indicates the rapid revolution of the seasons. The spring, that early age of the world, following hard on the reign of winter, and the barren rocks yet dripping with it, is past. How many plants have already dried up, lichens and algæ, which we can still remember as if belonging to a former epoch, saxifrage, crowfoot, anemone, columbine for the most part, etc. It is Lee's Cliff I am on. There is a growth confined to the damp and early spring. How dry and crisp the turf feels there now, not moist with melted snows, remembering, as it were, when it was the bottom of the sea. How wet-glossy the leaves of the red oak now, fully expanded. They shine as when the sun comes out after rain.

I find on a shelf of the rock the *Turritis stricta*, now gone to seed, two feet two inches

high, . . . pods upright and nearly three inches long, linear and flat, leaves decidedly lanceolate or linear. Some minute, imperfect, unexpanded flowers, still on it, appear as if they would have been yellowish.

In the very open park in rear of the rocks on the hill-top, where lambkill and huckleberries and grass alternate, came to one of those handsome, round, mirror-like pools, a rod or two in diameter, and surrounded with a border of fine weeds, such as you frequently meet with on the top of springy hills. Though warm and muddy at bottom, they are very beautiful and glassy, and look as if they were cool springs, so high, exposed to the light, yet so wild and fertile; as if the fertility of the lowlands was transferred to the summit of the hills. They are the kind of mirrors at which the huntresses in the golden age arranged their toilets, which the deer frequented and contemplated their branching horns in.

June 6, 1854. I perceive the sweetness of the locust blossoms fifteen or twenty rods off, as I go down the street. P. M. To Assabet bathing place and return by Stone Bridge. . . . The painted tortoises are now-a-days laying their eggs. I see where they have just been digging in the sand or gravel in a hundred places on the southerly sides of hills and banks near the river,

but they have laid their eggs in very few. I find none whole. Here is one which has made its hole with the hind part of its shell and its tail, apparently. . . . They are remarkably circumspect, and it is difficult to see one working. They stop instantly and draw in their heads, and do not move till you are out of sight, and then probably try a new place. They have dabbled in the sand and left the marks of their tails all around.

The black oaks, birches, etc., are covered with ephemerae of various sizes and colors, with one, two, or three, or no streamers, ready to take wing at evening, *i. e.*, about seven. I am covered with them and much incommoded.

The air over the river meadows is saturated with sweetness, but I look round in vain for the source, on the yellowish sensitive fern and the reddish eupatorium springing up.

From time to time at mid-afternoon, is heard the trump of a bull-frog, like a triton's horn.

I am struck now by the large, light-purple, *Viola palmatas* rising above the grass near the river.

Of oak leaves, there is the small, firm, few-lobed, wholesome, dark-green shrub oak leaf, light beneath.

The more or less deeply cut, and more or less dark green, or sometimes reddish, black oak, not light beneath. These two, bristle-pointed.

The very wet-glossy, obovatish, sinuate-edged swamp white oak, light beneath.

The small narrower, sinuated, and still more chestnut-like chinquapin, a little lighter beneath.

All these, more or less glossy, especially the swamp-white and shrub.

Then the dull green, *sometimes* reddish, more or less deeply cut or fingered, unarmed, round-lobed white oak, not light beneath.

The last three without bristles.

I remember best the sort of rosettes made by the wet-glossy leaves at the ends of some swamp white oak twigs ; also the wholesome and firm dark green shrub oak leaves, and some glossy and finely cut light green, black ? or red ? or scarlet ? oak leaves.

I see some devil's needles, a brilliant green with white and black, or open work and black wings, some with clear black wings, some with white bodies and black wings, etc.

6.30 A. M. Up Assabet. . . . Beautiful the hemlock fans now, broad at the ends of the lower branches which slant down, seen in the shade against the dark hillside ; such is the contrast of the very light green just put forth on their edges, with the old, very dark. I feast my eyes on it.

Sphinx moths about the flowers at evening, a night or two.

June 6th, 1855. You see the dark eye and shade of June on the river as well as on land, and a dust-like lint on river, apparently from the young leaves and bud scales, covering the waters which begin to be smooth, and imparting a sense of depth.

Blue-eyed grass, may be several days, in some places.

White weed, two or three days.

June 6, 1856. P. M. To Andromeda Ponds. Cold, mizzling weather. In the large circular hole or cellar at the turn-table on the railroad, which they are repairing, I see a star-nosed mole endeavoring in vain to bury himself in the sandy and gravelly bottom. Some inhuman fellow has cut off his tail. He is blue-black, with much fur, a very thick, plump animal, apparently some four inches long, but he occasionally shortens himself one third or more; looks as fat as a fat hog. His fore-feet are large, and set side-wise, or on their edges, and with these he shovels the earth aside, while his large, long, starred snout is feeling the way and breaking ground. I see deep indentations in his fur, where his eyes are situated, and once I saw distinctly his eye open, a dull, blue?-black bead, not very small; and he very plainly noticed my movements two feet off. He was using his eye as plainly as any creature that I ever saw. Yet it is said to be a question

whether their eyes are not merely rudimentary. . . . I carried him along to plowed ground where he buried himself in a minute or two.

How well-suited the lining of a bird's nest not only to the comfort of the young, but to keep the eggs from breaking, fine elastic grass stems or root fibres, pine needles, hair, or the like. These tender and brittle things, which you can hardly carry in cotton, lie there without harm.

June 6, 1857. 8 A. M. To Lee's Cliff by river. . . . This is June, the month of grass and leaves. Already the aspens are trembling again, and a new summer is offered me. I feel a little fluttered in my thoughts, as if I might be too late. Each season is but an infinitesimal point. It no sooner comes than it is gone. It has no duration. It simply gives a tone and hue to my thought. Each annual phenomenon is a reminiscence and prompting. Our thoughts and sentiments answer to the revolutions of the seasons as two cog-wheels fit into each other. We are conversant with only one point of contact at a time, from which we receive a prompting and impulse, and instantly pass to a new season or point of contact. A year is made up of a certain series and number of sensations and thoughts, which have their language in nature. Now I am ice, now I am sorrel. Each experience reduces itself to a mood of the mind. I see

a man grafting, for instance. What this imports chiefly is not apples to the owner or bread to the grafter, but a certain mood or train of thought to my mind. That is what the grafting is to me. Whether it is anything at all, even apples or bread, to anybody else, I cannot swear, for it would be worse than swearing through glass. I only see those other facts as through a glass, darkly. . . .

Krigias, with their somewhat orange yellow, spot the dry hills all the forenoon, and are very common, but as they are closed in the afternoon, they are but rarely noticed by walkers.

June 6, 1860. . . . 6.30 P. M. Up Assabet. . . . Not only the foliage begins to look dark and dense, but many ferns are fully grown, as the cinnamon and interrupted, and being curved over the bank and shore, add to the leafy impression of the season. The *Osmunda regalis* looks later and more tender, reddish brown still. It preserves its habit of growing in circles, though it may be on a steep bank, and one half the circle in the water. . . .

The trees commonly are not yet so densely leaved but that I can see through them, *e. g.*, I see through the red oak and the bass (below Dome Rock), looking toward the sky. They are a mere network of light and shade after all. The oak may be a little the thicker.

The white ash is considerably thinner than either. . . .

How full is the air of sound at sunset and just after! Especially at the end of a rain storm. Every bird seems to be singing in the wood across the stream, and there are the hylodes and the sounds of the village. Beside, sounds are more distinctly heard. Ever and anon we hear a few sucks or strokes from the bittern or stake-driver, wherever we lie to, as if he had taken the job of extending all the fences into the river, to keep the cows from straying round. We hear but three or four toads in all, to-night, but as many hylodes as ever. It is too cool, both water and air (especially the first), after the rain, for the toads. . . .

As the light is obscured after sunset, the birds rapidly cease their songs, and the swallows cease to flit over the river. Soon the bats are seen taking the places of the swallows, and flying back and forth like them, and commonly a late king-bird will be heard twittering still in the air. After the bats, or half an hour after sunset, the water bugs begin to spread themselves over the stream (though fifteen minutes earlier not one was seen without the pads), now when it is difficult to see them or the dimples they make, except you look toward the reflected western sky. It is evident that they dare not

come out thus by day for fear of fishes, and probably the nocturnal or vespertinal fishes, as eels and pouts, do not touch them. I think I see them all over Walden by day, and if so, it may be because there is not much danger from fishes in that very deep water.

June 7, 1841. . . . We are accustomed to exaggerate the immobility and stagnation of those eras [the early Oriental], as of the waters which leveled the steppes; but those slow revolving "years of the gods" were as rapid to all the needs of virtue as these bustling and hasty seasons. Man stands to revere, he kneels to pray. Methinks history will have to be tried by new tests to show what centuries were rapid and what slow. Corn grows in the night. Will this bustling era detain the future reader longer? Will the earth seem to have conversed more with the heavens during these times? Who is writing better Vedas? How science and art spread and flourished, how trivial conveniences were multiplied, that which is the gossip of the world is not recorded in them, and if they are left out of our scriptures, too, what will remain?

Since the battle of Bunker Hill we think the world has not been at a stand-still.

June 7, 1851. My practicalness is not to be trusted to the last. To be sure, I go upon my

legs for the most part, but being hard pushed and dogged by a superficial common sense which is bound to near objects by beaten paths, I am off the handle, as the phrase is; I begin to be transcendental and show where my heart is. I am like those Guinea fowl which Charles Darwin saw at the Cape de Verde Islands. He says: "They avoided us like partridges on a rainy day in September, running with their heads cocked up, and if pursued they readily took to the wing." Keep your distance, do not infringe on the interval between us, and I will pick up lime and lay real terrestrial eggs for you, and let you know by cackling when I have done it. When I have been asked to speak at a temperance meeting, my answer has been, I am too transcendental to serve you in your way. They would fain confine me to the rum-sellers and rum-drinkers, of whom I am not one, and whom I know little about. . . . There are few so temperate that they can afford to remind us even at table that they have a palate and a stomach.

We believe that the possibility of the future far exceeds the accomplishments of the past. We review the past with the common sense, but we anticipate the future with transcendental senses. In any sanest moments we find ourselves naturally expecting or prepared for far greater changes than any which we have experi-

enced within the period of distinct memory, only to be paralleled by experiences which are forgotten. Perchance there are revolutions which create an interval impossible to the memory.

One of those gentle, straight-down rainy days, when the rain begins by spotting the cultivated fields, as if shaken down from a pepper-box ; a fishing day, when I see one neighbor after another, having donned his oil-cloth suit, walking or riding past with a fish-pole, having struck work, a day and an employment to make philosophers of them all.

June 7, 1853. P. M. To Walden. Clover begins to redden the fields generally. The quail is heard at a distance. Buttercups of various kinds mingled, yellow the meadows, the tall, the bulbous, the repens. The cinquefoil, in its ascending state, keeping pace with the grass, is now abundant in the fields. Saw it one or two weeks ago. This is a feature of June. Still both high and low blueberry and huckleberry blossoms abound. The hemlock woods, their fan-like sprays edged or spotted with short, yellowish-green shoots, tier above tier, shelf above shelf, look like a cool bazaar of rich embroidered goods. How dense their shade, dark and cool beneath them, as in a cellar. No plants grow there, but the ground is covered with fine red leaves. It is oftenest on a side hill they grow.

The oven-bird runs from her covered nest, so close to the ground, under the lowest twigs and leaves, even the loose leaves on the ground, like a mouse, that I cannot get a fair view of her. She does not fly at all. Is it to attract me, or partly to protect herself?

Visited my night-hawk on her nest. Could hardly believe my eyes when I stood within seven feet and beheld her sitting on her eggs, her head towards me; she looked so Saturnian, so one with the earth, so sphynx-like, a relic of the reign of Saturn which Jupiter did not destroy, a riddle that might well cause a man to go dash his head against a stone. It was not an actual living creature, far less a winged creature of the air, but a figure in stone or bronze, a fanciful production of art, like the gryphon or phoenix. In fact, with its breast toward me, and, owing to its color or size, no bill perceptible, it looked like the end of a brand, such as are common in a clearing, its breast mottled, or alternately waved with dark brown and gray, its flat, grayish, weather-beaten crown, its eyes nearly closed, purposely, lest these bright beads should betray it, with the stony cunning of the sphynx. A fanciful work in bronze to ornament a mantel. It was enough to fill one with awe. The sight of this creature sitting on its eggs impressed me with the venerableness of the globe. There was

nothing novel about it. All the while this seemingly sleeping bronze sphynx, as motionless as the earth, was watching me with intense anxiety through those narrow slits in its eyelids. Another step, and it fluttered down the hill, close to the ground, with a wabbling motion, as if touching the ground now with the tip of one wing, now with the other, so ten rods to the water, which it skimmed close over a few rods, and then rose and soared in the air above me. Wonderful creature, which sits motionless on its eggs, on the barest, most exposed hills, with its eyes shut and its wings folded; and after the two days' storm, when you think it has become a fit symbol of the rheumatism, it suddenly rises into the air, a bird, one of the most aerial, supple, and graceful of creatures, without stiffness in its wings or joints. It was a fit prelude to meeting Prometheus bound to his rock on Caucasus.

June 7, 1854. . . . P. M. To Dugan Desert via Linnæa Hills. Linnæa abundantly out some days, say 3d or 4th.

The locusts so full of pendulous white racemes five inches long, filling the air with their sweetness, and resounding with the hum of humble and honey-bees, are very interesting. These racemes are strewn along the path by children.

I am struck by the rank, dog-like scent of the rue budded to blossom.

I am surprised at the size of green berries, shad-bush, low blueberries, choke-cherries, etc., etc. It is but a step from flower to fruit.

As I expected, I find the desert scored by the tracks of turtles, made evidently last night, though the rain of this morning has obliterated the marks of their tails. The tracks are about seven eighths of an inch in diameter, half an inch deep, two inches apart (from centre to centre) in each row, and the rows four or five inches apart. They have dabbled in the sand in many places, and made some small holes. Yesterday it was hot and dusty, and this morning it rained. Did they choose such a time? Yesterday I saw the painted and the wood tortoise out. Now I see a snapping turtle, its shell about a foot long, out here on the damp sand, with its head out, disturbed by me. It had just been excavating, and its shell, especially the fore part and sides, and still more its snout, were deeply covered with earth. It appears to use its shell as a kind of spade, whose handle is within, tilting it now this way, now that, and perhaps using its head and claws as a pick. It was in a little cloud of mosquitoes, which were continually settling on its head and flippers, but which it did not mind. Its sternum was slightly depressed. It seems that they are frequently found

x

fighting in the water, and sometimes dead in the spring, perhaps killed by the ice.

Common iris some days, one withered.

Saw again what I have pronounced the yellow-winged sparrow, *Fringilla passerina*, with white line down head, and yellow over eyes, and my seringo note. But this time the yellow of wings is not apparent; ochreous throat and breast. Quite different from the bay-wing and smaller.

This muggy evening I see fire-flies, the first I have seen or heard of this year.

June 7, 1855. . . . I have heard no musical gurgle-ee from blackbirds for a fortnight. They are now busy breeding.

June 7, 1858. P. M. To Walden. Warm weather has suddenly come, beginning yesterday. To-day it is yet warmer, 87° at 3 P. M., compelling me to put on a thin coat, and I see that a new season has arrived. June shadows are moving over waving grass fields, the crickets chirp uninterruptedly, and I perceive the agreeable acid scent of high blueberry bushes in bloom. The trees having leaved out, you notice their rounded tops suggesting shade. The night-hawk booms over arid hill-sides and sproutlands.

It is evidence enough against crows, hawks, and owls, proving their propensity to rob birds' nests of eggs and young, that smaller birds pursue them so often. You do not need the testi-

mony of so many farmers' boys when you can see and hear the small birds daily crying "Thief and murder" after these spoilers. What does it signify, the kingbird, blackbird, swallow, etc., pursuing a crow. They say plainly enough, "I know you of old, you villain; you want to devour my eggs or young. I have often caught you at it, and I'll publish you now." And probably the crow, pursuing the fish-hawk and eagle, proves that the latter sometimes devour their young.

As I was wading in this Wyman meadow, looking for bull-frog spawn, I saw a hole at the bottom where it was six or eight inches deep, by the side of a mass of mud and weeds, which rose just to the surface three or four feet from the shore. It was about five inches in diameter, with some sand at the mouth, just like a musquash's hole. As I stood there within two feet, a pout put her head out, as if to see who was there, and directly came forth, and disappeared under the target weed; but as I stood perfectly still, waiting for the water which I had disturbed to settle about the hole, she circled round and round several times between me and the hole cautiously, stealthily approaching the entrance, but as often withdrawing, and at last mustered courage to enter it. I then noticed another similar hole in the same mass, two or three feet from this. I

thrust my arm into the first, running it down about fifteen inches. It was a little more than a foot long, and enlarged somewhat at the end, the bottom also being about a foot beneath the surface, for it slanted downward. But I felt nothing within. I only felt a pretty regular and rounded apartment with firm walls of weedy or fibrous mud. I then thrust my arm into the other hole, which was longer and deeper, at first discovering nothing. But, trying again, I found that I had not reached the end, for it turned a little and descended more than I supposed. Here I felt a similar apartment or enlargement some six inches in diameter horizontally, but not quite so high, nor nearly so wide at its throat. Here, to my surprise, I felt something soft like a gelatinous mass of spawn, but, feeling a little further, felt the horns of a pout. I deliberately took hold of her by the head, and lifted her out of the hole and the water, having run my arm in two thirds of its length. She offered not the slightest resistance from first to last, even when I held her out of water before my face, and only darted away suddenly when I dropped her into the water. The entrance to the apartment was so narrow that she could hardly have escaped, if I had tried to prevent her. Putting in my arm again, I felt under where she had been, a flattish mass of ova, several inches in diameter,

resting on the mud, and took out some. Feeling again in the first hole, I found as much more there. Though I had been stepping round and over the second nest for several minutes, I had not scared the pout. The ova of the first nest already contained *white* wiggling young. I saw no motion in the others. The ova in each case were dull yellowish, and the size of small buck-shot. These nests did not communicate with each other, and had no other outlet.

Pouts then make their nests in shallow mud-holes or bays in masses of weedy mud, or probably in the muddy bank, and the old pout hovers over the spawn or keeps guard at the entrance. Where do the Walden pouts breed when they have not access to the meadow? The first pout, whose eggs were most developed, was the largest, and had some slight wounds on the back. The other may have been the male, in the act of fertilizing the ova.

I sit in my boat in the twilight, by the edge of the river. Bull-frogs now are in full blast. I do not hear other frogs. Their notes are probably drowned. . . . Some of these great males are yellow, or quite yellowish over the whole back. Are not the females oftenest white-throated? What lungs, what health, what terenity (if not serenity) their note suggests! At length I hear the faint stertoration of a *Rana palustris* (if not *halecina*?)

Seeing a large head with its prominent eyes projecting above the middle of the river, I found it was a bull-frog coming across. It swam under water a rod or two, and then came up to see where it was, on its way. It is thus they cross when sounds or sights attract them to more desirable shores. Probably they prefer the night for such excursions, for fear of large pickerel, etc.

June 7, 1860. White clover already whitens some fields, and resounds with bees.

June 8, 1850. Not till June can the grass be said to be waving in the fields. When the frogs dream and the grass waves, and the buttercups toss their heads, and the heat disposes one to bathe in the ponds and streams, then is summer begun.

June 8, 1851. I found the white pine top full of staminate blossom buds, not yet fully grown or expanded, with a rich red tint, like a tree full of fruit, but I could find no pistillate blossom.

June 8, 1853. P. M. To Well Meadow. . . . As I stood by the last small pond near Well Meadow, I heard a hawk scream, and looking up, saw a pretty large one circling not far off, and incessantly screaming, as I at first supposed to scare and so discover its prey. But its screaming was so incessant, and it circled from

time to time so near me as I moved southward, that I began to think it had a nest near by, and was angry at my intrusion into its domains. As I moved, the bird still followed and screamed, coming sometimes quite near, or within gunshot, then circling far off or high into the sky. At length, as I was looking up at it, thinking it the only living creature within view, I was singularly startled to behold, as my eye by chance penetrated deeper into the blue, — the abyss of blue above which I had taken for a solitude, — its mate silently soaring at an immense height, and seemingly indifferent to me. We are surprised to discover that there can be an eye on us on that side, and so little suspected, that the heavens are so full of eyes, though they look so blue and spotless. Then I knew that it was the female that circled and screamed below. At last the latter rose gradually to meet her mate, and they circled together there, as if they could not possibly feel any anxiety on my account. When I drew nearer to the tall trees where I suspected the nest to be, the female descended again, swept by screaming, still nearer to me, just over the tree tops, and finally, while I was looking for the orchis in the swamp, alighted on a white pine twenty or thirty rods off. (The great fringed orchis just open.) At length I detected the nest about eighty feet from the ground, in a

very large white pine by the edge of the swamp. It was about three feet in diameter, of dry sticks, and a young hawk, apparently as big as its mother, stood on the edge looking down at me, and only moving its head when I moved.

In its imperfect plumage, and the slow motion of its head, it reminded me strongly of a vulture, so large and gaunt. It appeared a tawny brown on its neck and breast, and dark brown or blackish on wings. The mother was light beneath, and apparently lighter still on the rump.

White pine in flower. All the female flowers on the very top of the tree, a small crimson cone upright on the ends of its peduncles, while the last year's, now three or four inches long, and green, are curved downward like scythes. Best seen looking down on the tops of lower pines from the top of a higher one. Apparently just beginning.

June 8, 1854. The *Rosa nitida* bud, which I plucked yesterday, has blossomed to-day, so that notwithstanding the rain, I will put it down for to-day. *Erigeron strigosus* slowly opening, perhaps to-morrow.

Meadow rue, with its rank, dog-like scent. Ribwort plantain is abundantly in bloom, fifteen or sixteen inches high. How long?

Herndon in his "Exploration of the Amazon," says that "There is wanting an industrious and

active population, who know what the comforts of life are, and who have artificial wants, to draw out the great resources of the country." But what are the "artificial wants" to be encouraged, and the "great resources" of a country? surely not the love of luxuries, like the tobacco and slaves of his native (?) Virginia, or that fertility of soil which produces these. The chief want is ever a life of deep experiences, *i. e.*, character, which alone draws out "the great resources" of Nature. When our wants cease to be chiefly superficial and trivial, which is commonly meant by artificial, and begin to be wants of character, then the great resources of a country are taxed and drawn out, and the result, the staple production, is poetry. Have the great resources of Virginia been drawn out by such artificial wants as there exist? Was that country really designed by its maker to produce slaves and tobacco? or something more than freemen, and food for freemen? Wants of character, aspirations, this is what is wanted, but what is called civilization does not always substitute this for the barren simplicity of the savage.

June 8, 1860. 2 P. M. To Well Meadow via Walden. Within a day or two has begun that season of summer when you see afternoon showers — perhaps with thunder — or the threat of them dark in the horizon, and are uncertain

whether to venture far away or without an umbrella. I noticed the very first such cloud on the 25th of May ; the dark iris of June. When you go forth to walk at 2 P. M. you see perhaps, in the southwest or west, or may be eastern horizon, a dark and threatening mass of cloud, showing itself just over the woods, its base horizontal and dark, with lighter edges where it is rolled up to the light, while all beneath is a dark skirt of falling rain. These are summer showers, come with the heat of summer.

What delicate fans are the great red-oak leaves, now just developed, so thin, and of so tender a green. They hang loosely, flaccidly down, at the mercy of the wind, like a new-born butterfly or dragon fly. A strong, cold wind would blacken and tear them now. They remind me of the frailest stuffs hung around a dry-goods shop. They have not been hardened by exposure yet, these raw and tender lungs of the tree. The white-oak leaves are especially downy and lint your clothes.

This is truly June when you begin to see brakes (dark green) fully expanded in the wood paths.

In early June, methinks, as now, we have clearer days, less haze, more or less breeze, especially after rain, and more sparkling water, than before. I look from Fair Haven Hill. As

there is more shade in the woods, so there is more shade in the sky, *i. e.*, dark, heavy clouds contrasted with the bright sky; not the gray clouds of spring.

The leaves generally are almost fully expanded, *i. e.*, some of each tree.

June 9-14, 1850. I see the pollen of the pitch-pine now beginning to cover the surface of the pond. Most of the pines at the north-northwest end have none, and in some there is only one pollen-bearing flower.

There are as many strata at different levels of life as there are leaves in a book. Most men have probably lived in two or three. When on the higher levels we can remember the lower, but when on the lower we cannot remember the higher.

My imagination, my love and reverence and admiration, my sense of the miraculous, is not so excited by any event as by the remembrance of my youth. Men talk about Bible miracles because there is no miracle in their lives. Cease to gnaw that crust. There is ripe fruit over your head.

Woe to him who wants a companion, for he is unfit to be the companion even of himself.

We inspire friendship in men when we have contracted friendship with the gods.

When we cease to sympathize with and to be

personally related to men, and begin to be universally related, then we are capable of inspiring others with the sentiment of love for us.

We hug the earth. How rarely we mount! How rarely we climb a tree! We might elevate ourselves. That pine would make us dizzy. You can see the mountains from it as you never did before.

Shall not a man have his spring as well as the plants?

Any reverence even for a material thing proceeds from an elevation of character. Layard, speaking of the reverence for the sun exhibited by the Yezidis, or Worshipers of the Devil, says, "They are accustomed to kiss the object on which the sun's first beams fall; and I have frequently, when traveling in their company at sunrise, observed them perform this ceremony. For fire, as symbolic, they have nearly the same reverence; they never spit into it, but frequently pass their hands through the flame, kiss them, and pass them over their right eyebrow, or sometimes over the whole face."

Who taught the oven-bird to conceal her nest? It is on the ground, yet out of sight. What cunning there is in Nature! No man could have arranged it more artfully for the purpose of concealment. Only the escape of the bird betrays it.

June 9, 1851. Gathered the *Linnæa borealis*.

June 9, 1852. The buck-bean in Hubbard's meadow just going out of blossom. The yellow water ranunculus is an important flower in the river now, rising above the white lily pads, whose flower does not yet appear. I perceive that their petals, washed ashore, line the sand conspicuously.

For a week past we have had washing days. The grass is waving, and the trees having leaved out, their boughs feel the effect of the breeze. Thus new life and motion is imparted to the trees. The season of waving boughs, and the lighter under-sides of the new leaves are exposed. This is the first half of June. Already the grass is not so fresh and liquid velvety a green, having much of it blossomed, and some even gone to seed, and it is mixed with reddish ferns and other plants, but the general leafiness, shadiness, and waving of grass and boughs characterize the season. The wind is not quite agreeable, because it prevents your hearing the birds sing. Meanwhile the crickets are strengthening their choir. The weather is very clear, and the sky bright. The river shines like silver. Methinks this is a traveler's month. The locust in bloom. The undulating rye. The deciduous trees have filled up the intervals between the evergreens, and the woods are bosky now.

The priests of the Germans and Britons were Druids. They had their sacred oaken groves. Such were their steeple-houses. Nature was to some extent a fane to them. There was fine religion in that form of worship, and Stonehenge remains are evidence of some vigor in the worshipers, as the pyramids perchance of the vigor of the Egyptians, derived from the slime of the Nile. Evelyn says of the oaks, which he calls "these robust sons of the earth," "'Tis reported that the very shade of this tree is so wholesome that the sleeping or lying under it becomes a present remedy to paralytics, and recovers those whom the mistaken malign influence of the walnut-tree has smitten." Which we may take for a metaphorical expression of the invigorating influence of rude, wild, robust nature compared with the effeminating luxury of civilized life. Evelyn has collected the fine exaggerations of antiquity respecting the virtues and habits of trees, and added some himself. He says, "I am told that those small young acorns which we find in the stock-doves' craws are a delicious fare, as well as those incomparable salads of young herbs taken out of the maws of partridges at a certain season of the year, which gives them a preparation far exceeding all the art of cookery." His oft-repeated glorification of the forest from age to age smacks

of religion, is even Druidical. Evelyn is as good as several old Druids, and his "*Sylva*," is a new kind of prayer-book, a glorifying of the trees and enjoying them forever, which was the chief end of his life.

A child loves to strike on a tin pan or other ringing vessel with a stick, because its ears being fresh, attentive, and percipient, it detects the finest music in the sound at which all Nature assists. Is not the very cope of the heavens the sounding-board of the infant drummer? So, clear and unprejudiced ears hear the sweetest and most soul-stirring melody in tinkling cow-bells and the like (dogs baying the moon), not to be referred to association, but intrinsic in the sound itself; those cheap and simple sounds which men despise because their ears are dull and debauched. Ah, that I were so much a child that I could unfailingly draw music from a quart pot. Its little ears tingle with the melody. To it there is music in sound alone.

Evelyn speaks of mel-dews attracting bees. Can mildew be corrupted from this? He says that the alder laid under water "will harden like a very stone," and speaks of alders being used "for the draining of grounds by placing them in the trenches," which I have just seen done here under Clamshell Hill.

Peaches are the principal crop in Lincoln, and

cherries a very important one, yet Evelyn says, "We may read that the peach was at first accounted so tender and delicate a tree as that it was believed to thrive only in Persia; and even in the days of Galen it grew no nearer than Egypt of all the Roman provinces, but was not seen in the city till about thirty years before Pliny's time;" but now it is the principal crop cultivated in Lincoln in New England, and it is also cultivated extensively in the West, and on lands not half a dozen years vacated by the Indians. Also, "It was six hundred and eighty years after the foundation of Rome ere Italy had tasted a cherry of their own, which, being then brought thither out of Pontus, did after one hundred and twenty years travel *ad ultimos Britannos*," and, I may add, *Lincolnos*. As Evelyn says, "Methinks this should be a wonderful incitement."

He well says, "a sobbing rain." Evelyn's love of his subject teaches him to use many expressive words. . . . He speaks of pines "pearling out into gums." He talks of modifying the air as well as the soil about plants, making "the remedy as well regional as topical." This suggests the propriety of Shakespeare's expression, "the region cloud," region meaning thus upper regions relatively to the earth. He speaks of a "dewie sperge or brush" to be used instead of

a watering-pot which "gluts" the earth. He calls the kitchen-garden the "Olitory garden." In a dedication of his "Kalendarium Hortense" to Cowley, he inserts two or three good sentences or quotations, viz., "as the philosopher in Seneca desired only bread and herbs to dispute felicity with Jupiter." So of Cowley's simple, retired life. "Who would not, like you, *cachet sa vie?*" "delivered from the gilded impertinences of life."

June 9, 1853. 4.15 A. M. To Nashawtuck by boat. A prevalent fog, though not quite so thick as the last described. . . . Here and there deep valleys are excavated in it, as painters imagine the Red Sea for the passage of Pharaoh's host, wherein trees and houses appear, as it were, at the bottom of the sea. It is interesting to see the tops of the trees first and most distinctly before you see their trunks or where they stand on earth. Far in the northeast there is, as before, apparently a tremendous surf breaking on a distant shoal. It is either a real shoal, that is, a hill over which the fog breaks, or the effect of the sun's rays on it.

The first white lily bud. White clover is abundant and very sweet, on the common, filling the air, but not yet elsewhere as last year.

8 A. M. To Orchis Swamp. Well Meadow. Hear a goldfinch. This the second or third only

that I have heard. White-weed now whitens the fields. There are many *star* flowers. I remember the anemone especially. The rue anemone is not yet all gone, lasting longer than the true one; above all, the *trientalis*, and of late the yellow Bethlehem star, and perhaps others.

I have come with a spy-glass to look at the hawks. They have detected me, and are already screaming over my head more than half a mile from the nest. I find no difficulty in looking at the young hawk (there appears to be one only standing on the edge of the nest); resting the glass in the crotch of a young oak, I can see every wink and the color of its iris. It watches me more steadily than I it, now looking straight down at me with both eyes and outstretched neck, now turning its head and looking with one eye. How its eye and its whole head express anger. Its anger is more in its eye than in its beak. It is quite hoary over the eye and under the chin. The mother meanwhile is incessantly circling about, and above its charge and me, farther or nearer, sometimes withdrawing a quarter of a mile, but occasionally coming to alight for a moment, almost within gun-shot, on the top of a tall white pine; but I hardly bring my glass fairly to bear on her, and get sight of her angry eye through the pine needles, before she circles away again. Thus for an hour that I lay there, screaming

every minute, or oftener, with open bill, now and then pursued by a kingbird or a blackbird, who appear merely to annoy her by dashing down at her back. Meanwhile the male is soaring quite undisturbed at a great height above, evidently not hunting, but amusing or recreating himself in the thinner and cooler air, as if pleased with his own circles like a geometer, and enjoying the sublime scene. I doubt if he has his eye fixed on any prey on the earth. He probably descends to hunt.

Got two or three handfuls of strawberries on Fair Haven. They are already drying up. . . . It is natural that the first fruit which the earth bears should emit, and be, as it were, an embodiment of, that vernal fragrance with which the air has teemed. Strawberries are its manna, found ere long where that fragrance has filled the air. Little natural beds or patches on the sides of dry hills where the fruit sometimes reddens the ground. But it soon dries up, unless there is a great deal of rain. Well, are not the juices of early fruit distilled from the air? Prunella out. The meadows are now yellow with the golden senecio, a more orange-yellow mingled with the light, glossy yellow of the buttercup. The green fruit of the sweet fern now. The *Juniperus repens* appears (though now dry and effete) to have blossomed recently. The

tall, white erigeron just out. I think it is *strigosum*, but tinged with purple sometimes.

The bull-frogs are in full blast to-night. I do not hear a toad from my window, only the crickets beside. The toads I have but rarely heard of late. So there is an evening for the toads, and another for the bull-frogs.

June 9, 1854. P. M. To Well Meadow. The summer aspect of the river begins, perhaps, when the *Utricularia vulgaris* is first seen on the surface, as yesterday.

As I go along the railroad causeway I see, in the cultivated ground, a lark flashing his white tail, and showing his handsome yellow breast with its black crescent, like an Indian locket. For a day or two I have heard the fine seringo note of the cherry birds, and seen them flying past, the only? birds, methinks, that I see in small flocks now, except swallows.

Find the great fringed orchis out apparently two or three days, two are almost fully out, two or three only budded; a large spike of peculiarly delicate, pale purple flowers growing in the luxuriant and shady swamp, amid hellebores, ferns, golden senecio, etc. It is remarkable that this, one of the fairest of all our flowers, should also be one of the rarest, for the most part, not seen at all. . . . The village belle never sees this more delicate belle of the swamp. How little

relation between our life and its! . . . The seasons go by, to us, as if it were not. A beauty reared in the shade of a convent, who has never strayed beyond the convent bell. Only the skunk or owl, or other inhabitant of the swamp, beholds it. It does not pine because man does not admire it. I am inclined to think of it as a relic of the past, as much as the arrowhead or the tomahawk.

The air is now pretty full of shad flies, and there is an incessant sound made by the fishes leaping for such as are struggling on the surface. It sounds like the lapsing of a swift stream sucking amid rocks. The fishes make a business of thus getting their evening meal, dimpling the river like large drops, as far as I can see, sometimes making a loud plashing. Meanwhile, the kingfishers are on the lookout for the fishes as they rise, and I saw one dive in the twilight and go off uttering his cr-r-ack-cr-r-rack.

Covered with disgrace, this State has sat down coolly, to try for their lives the men who attempted to do its duty for it, and this is called justice! They who have shown that they can behave particularly well, they alone are put under bonds for their good behavior! It behoves every man to see that his influence is on the side of justice, and let the courts make their own characters. What is any political organization

worth, when it is in the service of the Devil? While the whole military force of the State, if need be, is at the service of a slaveholder, to enable him to carry back a slave, not a soldier is offered to save a citizen of Massachusetts from being kidnapped. Is this what all these arms, all this "training" has been for, these seventy-eight years past? . . . The marines and the militia, whose bodies were used lately, were not men of sense nor of principle; in a high moral sense, they were not men at all.

June 9, 1856. P. M. To Corner Spring. Without an umbrella, thinking the weather settled at last. There are some large cumuli with glowing, downy cheeks, floating about. Now I notice where an elm is in the shadow of a cloud, the black elm tops and shadows of June. It is a dark eyelash, which suggests a flashing eye beneath. It suggests houses that lie under the shade, the repose and siesta of summer noons, the thunder cloud, bathing, and all that belongs to summer. These veils are now spread here and there over the village. They suggest also the creak of crickets, a June sound now fairly begun, inducing contemplation and philosophic thoughts.

June 9, 1857. P. M. To Violet, Sorrel, and Calla Swamp. In the sproutland beyond the red huckleberry, an indigo bird, which chirps

about me, as if it had a nest there. This is a splendid and marked bird, high-colored as is the tanager, looking strange in this latitude. Glowing indigo. It flits from the top of one bush to another, chirping as if anxious. Wilson says it sings, not like most other birds, in the morning and evening chiefly, but also in the middle of the day. In this I notice it is like the tanager, the other fiery-plumaged bird. They seem to love the heat. It probably had its nest in one of these bushes.

I had said to P—— “It will be worth the while to look for other rare plants in Calla Swamp, for I have observed that where one rare plant grows, there will commonly be others.” Carrying out that thought this P. M., I had not taken three steps at this swamp bare-legged, before I found the *Naumburgia thyrsiflora* in sphagnum and water, which I had not seen growing before. (C—— brought one to me from Hubbard’s Great Meadow once.) It is hardly beginning yet. (In prime June 24th.)

June 9, 1860. 6 P. M. Paddle to Flint’s Bridge. The water bugs begin to venture out on to the stream from the shadow of a dark wood, as at the Island. So soon as the dusk begins to settle on the river, they begin to steal out, and to extend their circling far amid the bushes and reeds over the channel of the river

They do not simply then, if ever, venture forth, but then invariably and at once, the whole length of the river, they one and all sally out, and begin to dimple its broad surface, as if it were a necessity so to do.

June 10, 1853. P. M. To Mason's Pasture, in Carlisle. Haying begins in front yards. Cool, but agreeable easterly wind. The streets now beautiful with verdure and the shade of elms, under which you look through an air, clear for summer, to the woods in the horizon.

. . . As C — and I go through the town, we hear the cool peep of the robin calling to its young now learning to fly. The locust bloom is now perfect, filling the street with its sweetness, but it is more agreeable to my eye than my nose. . . . The fuzzy seeds or down of the black willow is filling the air over the river, and, falling on the water, covers its surface. By the 30th of May, at least, white maple keys were falling. How early then they had matured their seed. The mountain laurel will begin to bloom to-morrow. The frost some weeks since killed most of the buds and shoots, except where they were protected by the trees or by themselves, and now new shoots have put forth, and grow four or five inches from the sides of what were the leading ones. It is a plant which plainly requires the protection of the wood. It is stunted in the open pasture.

What shall this great wild tract over which we strolled be called? Many farmers have pastures there, and wood-lots and orchards. It consists mainly of rocky pastures. It contains what I call the Boulder Field, the Yellow Birch Swamp, the Black Birch Hill, the Laurel Pasture, the Hog Pasture, the White Pine Grove, the Easterbrooks Place, the Old Lime Kiln, the Lime Quarries, Spruce Swamp, the Ermine Weasel Woods ; also, the Oak Meadows, the Cedar Swamp, the Kibbe Place, and the old place northwest of Brooks Clark's. Ponkaw-tasset bounds it on the south. There are a few frog-ponds and an old mill-pond within it, and Bateman's Pond on its edge. What shall the whole be called? The old Carlisle road which runs through the middle of it is bordered on each side with wild apple pastures, where the trees stand without order, having, many or most of them, sprung up by accident or from pomace sown at random, and are, for the most part, concealed by birches and pines. These orchards are very extensive, and yet many of these apple trees, growing as forest trees, bear good crops of apples. It is a paradise for walkers in the fall. There are also boundless huckleberry pastures, as well as many blueberry swamps. Shall we call it the Easterbrook Country? It would make a princely estate in Europe. Yet it is owned

by farmers who live by the labor of their hands and do not esteem it much. Plenty of huckleberries and barberries here.

A second great uninhabited tract is that on the Marlboro' road, stretching westerly from Francis Wheeler's to the river, and beyond about three miles, and from Harrington's, on the north, to Dakin's, on the south, more than a mile in width.

A third, the Walden Woods.

A fourth, the Great Fields. These four are all in Concord.

There are one or two in the town who probably have Indian blood in their veins, and when they exhibit any unusual irascibility, the neighbors say they have got their Indian blood roused.

Now methinks the birds begin to sing less tumultuously, as the weather grows more constantly warm, with morning, noon, and evening songs, and suitable recesses in the concert.

High blackberries are conspicuously in bloom, whitening the sides of lanes.

Mention is made in the Town Records, as quoted by Shattuck, p. 33, under date of 1654, of "the Hogepen-walke about Annursnake," and reference is at the same time made to "the old hogepen." . . . There is some propriety in calling such a tract a walk, methinks, from the habit which hogs have of walking about with

an independent air, and pausing from time to time to look about from under their flapping ears and snuff the air. The hogs I saw this afternoon, all busily rooting without holding up their heads to look at us, the whole field appearing as if it had been most miserably ploughed or scarified with a harrow, with their shed to retreat to in rainy weather, affected me as more human than other quadrupeds. They are comparatively clean about their lodgings.

June 10, 1856. P. M. To Dugan Desert. — I hear the huckleberry bird now add to its usual strain *a-tea tea tea tea tea*.

A painted tortoise laying her eggs ten feet from the wheel track on the Marlboro' road. She paused at first, but I sat down within two feet, and she soon resumed her work, had excavated a hollow about five inches wide and six long in the moistened sand, and cautiously, with long intervals, she continued her work, resting always her fore feet on the same spot, and never looking round, her eye shut all but a narrow slit. Whenever I moved, perhaps to brush off a mosquito, she paused. A wagon approached, rumbling afar off, and then there was a pause till it had passed, and long after, a tedious, *naturlangsam* pause of the slow-blooded creature, a sacrifice of time such as those animals are up to which slumber half a year and live for

centuries. It was twenty minutes before I discovered that she was not making the hole, but filling it up slowly, having laid her eggs. She drew the moistened sand under herself, scraping it along from behind with both feet brought together. The claws turned inward. In the long pauses the ants troubled her, as the mosquitoes, me, by running over her eyes, which made her snap or dart out her head suddenly, striking the shell. She did not dance on the sand, nor finish covering the hollow quite so carefully as the one observed last year. She went off suddenly, and quickly at first, with a slow but sure instinct through the wood toward the swamp.

In a hollow apple tree, hole eighteen inches deep, young pigeon woodpeckers, large and well feathered. They utter their squeaking hiss whenever I cover the hole with my hand, apparently taking it for the approach of the mother.

June 10, 1857. . . . A striped snake (so-called) was running about in a yard this forenoon, and in the afternoon it was found to have shed its slough, leaving it half way out of a hole which probably it used to confine it in. It was about in its new skin. Many creatures, devil's needles, etc., cast their sloughs now. Can't I?

F.— tells me to-day, that he has seen a reg

ular barn swallow, with forked tail, about his barn, which was *black*, not rufous.

June 10, 1858. . . . As we entered a rye field, I saw what I took to be a hawk fly up from the other end, though it may have been a crow. It was soon pursued by small birds. When I got there, I found an *Emys insculpta* on its back, with its head and feet drawn in and motionless, and what looked like the track of a crow on the sand. Undoubtedly the bird which I saw had been pecking at it, and perhaps they get many of their eggs.

June 10, 1859. Surveying. . . .

June 10, 1860. 2 P. M. To Anursnack. . . . There is much handsome interrupted fern in the Painted Cup Meadow, and near the top of one of the clumps we noticed something like a large cocoon, the color of the rusty cinnamon fern wool. It was a red bat, the New York bat, so-called. It hung suspended, head directly downward, with its little sharp claws or hooks caught through one of the divisions at the base of one of the pinnæ, above the fructification. It was a delicate rusty brown, in color very like the wool of the cinnamon fern, with the whiter bare spaces, seen through it early in the season. I thought at first glance it was a broad cocoon, then that it was the plump body of a monstrous emperor moth. It was rusty or reddish brown,

white or hoary within, with a white, apparently triangular spot beneath, about the insertion of the wings. Its wings were very compactly folded up, the principal bones (dark or reddish) lying flat along the under side of its body, and a hook on each, meeting its opposite under the chin of the creature. It did not look like fur, but was like the plush of the ripe cat-tail head, though more loose, all trembling in the wind and with the pulsations of the animal. I broke off the top of the fern, and let the bat lie on its back in my hand. I held it and turned it about for ten or fifteen minutes, but it did not awake. Once or twice it opened its eyes a little, and even raised its old, baggish head, and opened its mouth, but soon drowsily dropped the head and fell asleep again. Its ears were nearly bare. It was more attentive to sounds than to motions. Finally by shaking it, and especially by hissing or whistling, I thoroughly awakened it, and it fluttered off twenty or thirty rods to the woods. I cannot but think that its instinct taught it to cling to the interrupted fern, since it might readily be mistaken for a mass of its fruit. . . . Unless it moved its head wide awake, it looked like a tender infant.

June 11, 1851. Last night, a beautiful summer night, not too warm, moon not quite full, after two or three rainy days. Walked to Fair

Haven by railroad, returning by Potter's pasture and Sudbury road. I feared at first that there would be too much white light, like the pale remains of daylight, and not a yellow, gloomy, dreamier light; that it would be like a candle-light by day; but when I got away from the town and deeper into the night, it was better. I saw by the shadows cast by the inequalities of the clayey sand-bank in the Deep Cut, that it was necessary to see objects by moonlight as well as sunlight, to get a complete notion of them. This bank had looked much more flat by day, when the light was stronger, but now the heavy shadows revealed its prominences. The prominences are light, made more remarkable by the dark shadows they cast. . . . I hear the night-hawks uttering their squeaking notes high in the air, now at nine o'clock, P. M., and occasionally, what I do not remember to have heard so late, their booming note. It sounds more as if under a cope than by day. The sound is not so fugacious, going off to be lost amid the spheres, but is echoed hollowly to earth, making the low roof of heaven vibrate. Such a sound is more confused and dissipated by day.

The whippoorwill suggests how wide asunder are the woods and the town. Its note is very rarely heard by those who live on the street, and then it is thought to be of ill-omen. Only the

dwellers on the outskirts of the village hear it occasionally. It sometimes comes into their yards. But go into the woods in a warm night at this season, and it is the prevailing sound. I hear now five or six at once. It is no more of ill-omen, therefore, here, than the night and the moonlight are. It is a bird not only of the woods, but of the night side of the woods. I hear some whippoorwills on hills, others in thick wooded vales, which ring hollow and cavernous, like an apartment or cellar, with their note, as when I hear the working of some artisan within an apartment. New beings have usurped the air we breathe, rounding nature, filling her crevices with sound. To sleep where you may hear the whippoorwill in your dreams.

I hear from this upland, whence I see Wachusett by day, a wagon crossing one of the bridges. I have no doubt that in some places to-night I should be sure to hear every carriage which crossed a bridge over the river, within the limits of Concord, for in such an hour and atmosphere the sense of hearing is wonderfully assisted, and asserts a new dignity. We become the Hearalls of the story. . . . The planks of a bridge, struck like a bell swung near the earth, emit a very resonant and penetrating sound. And then it is to be considered that the bell is in this instance hung over water, and that the night air, not only

on account of its stillness, but perhaps on account of its density, is more favorable to the transmission of sound. If the whole town were a raised plank floor, what a din there would be !

I now descend round the corner of the grain field, through the pitch-pine wood, into a lower field, more inclosed by woods, and find myself in a colder, damp, and misty atmosphere, with much dew on the grass. I seem to be nearer to the origin of things. There is something creative and primal in the cool mist. This dewy mist does not fail to suggest music to me, unaccountably, fertility, the origin of things. An atmosphere which has forgotten the sun, where the ancient principle of moisture prevails. It is laden with the condensed fragrance of plants, as it were, distilled dews.

The woodland paths are never seen to such advantage as in a moonlight night, so embowered, still opening before you almost against expectation as you walk. You are so completely in the woods, and yet your feet meet no obstacles. It is as if it were not a path, but an open, winding passage through the bushes, which your feet find. Now I go by the spring, and when I have risen to the same level as before, find myself in the warmer stratum again. These warmer veins, in a cool evening like this, do not fail to be agreeable.

The woods are about as destitute of inhabitants at night as the streets. In both there will be some night walkers. There are but few wild creatures to seek their prey. The greater part of its inhabitants have retired to rest.

Ah, that life that I have known ! How hard it is to remember what is most memorable. We remember how we itched, not how our hearts beat. I can sometimes recall to mind the quality, the immortality of my youthful life, but in memory is the only relation to it.

I hear the night-warbler breaking out as in his dreams, made so from the first for some mysterious reason.

Our spiritual side takes a more distinct form now, like our shadow which we see accompanying us.

I do not know but I feel less vigor at night, — my legs will not carry me so far, as if the night were less favorable to muscular exertion, weakened us somewhat, as darkness turns plants pale, — but perhaps my experience is to be referred to my being already exhausted by the day ; yet sometimes, after a hard day's work, I have found myself unexpectedly vigorous. I have never tried the experiment fairly.

Only the harvest and hunter's moons are famous, but I think that each full moon deserves to be, and has its own character, well-marked. One might be called the midsummer night moon.

So still and moderate is the night. No scream is heard, whether of fear or joy. No great comedy, no tragedy is being enacted. The chirping of crickets is the most universal, if not the loudest sound. There is no French revolution in Nature, no excess. She is warmer or colder by a degree or two.

My shadow has the distinctness of a second person, a certain black companion bordering on the imp, and I ask who is this that I see dodging behind me as I am about to sit down on a rock. The rocks do not feel warm to-night, for the air is warmest, nor does the sand particularly.

No one, to my knowledge, has observed the minute differences in the seasons. Hardly two nights are alike.

A book of the seasons, each page of which should be written in its own season and out of doors, or in its own locality, wherever it may be.

When you get into the road, though far from the town, and feel the sand under your feet, it is as if you had reached your own gravel walk. You no longer hear the whippoorwill nor regard your own shadow, for here you expect a fellow traveler. You catch yourself walking merely. The road leads your steps and thoughts alike to the town. You see only the path, and your thoughts wander from the objects that are pre-

sented to your senses. You are no longer in place. It is like conformity, walking in the ways of men.

June 11, 1852. — It commonly happens that a flower is considered more beautiful that is not followed by fruit. It must culminate in the flower.

The red-eye sings now in the woods perhaps more than any other bird.

As I climbed the cliffs, when I jarred the foliage, I perceived an exquisite perfume which I could not trace to its source. Ah, those fugacious, universal fragrances of the meadows and woods! odors rightly mingled!

The shrub oaks on the plain are so covered with foliage that, when I look down on them from the cliffs, I am impressed as if I looked down on a forest of oaks.

The oven-bird and the thrasher sing. The last has a sort of chuckle. The crickets begin to sing in warm, dry places.

Lupines, their pods and seeds. First, the profusion of color, spikes of flowers rising above and prevailing over the leaves; then the variety in different clumps, rose? purple, blue, and white; then the handsome palmate leaf, made to hold dew. Gray says the name is from *lupus*, wolf, because they "were thought to devour the fertility of the soil." This is scurrilous.

Under Fair Haven. First grew the *Viola pedata* here; then lupines, mixed with the delicate snapdragon. This soil must abound with the blue principle.

Utricularia vulgaris, common bladderwort, a dirty-conditioned flower, like a sluttish woman with a gaudy yellow bonnet.

Those spotted maple leaves, what mean their bright colors? Yellow, with a greenish centre and crimson border, on the green leaves, as if the great chemist had dropped some strong acid, by chance, from a phial designed for autumnal use! Very handsome. Decay and disease are often beautiful, like the pearly tear of the shell-fish and the hectic glow of consumption.

June 11, 1853. The upland fields are already less green where the June grass is ripening its seed. They are greenest when only its blade is seen. In the sorrel fields, also, what lately was the ruddy, rosy cheek of health, now that the sorrel is ripening and dying, has become the tanned and imbrowened cheek of manhood.

Probably blackbirds were never less numerous along our river than in these years. They do not depend on the clearing of the woods and the cultivation of the orchards, etc. The streams and meadows in which they delight always existed. Most of the towns, soon after they were settled, were obliged to set a price upon their heads.

In 1672, according to the town records of Concord, instruction was given to the selectmen, "That encouragement be given for the destroying of blackbirds and jaies." Shattuck, p. 45.

I remember Helen's telling me that John Marston, of Taunton, told her that he was aboard a vessel, during the Revolution, which met another vessel, and, as I think, one hailed the other. A French name being given could not be understood; whereupon a sailor, probably aboard his vessel, ran out on the bowsprit and shouted, "*La Sensible*" (the vessel in which John Adams was being brought back from or carried out to France), and that sailor's name was Thoreau.

My father has an idea that he stood on the wharf and cried this to the bystanders. He tells me that when the war came on, my grandfather, being thrown out of business and being a young man, went a-privateering. I find from his Diary that John Adams set sail from Port Louis at L'Orient in the French frigate *Sensible*, Captain Chavagnes, June 17, 1779, the *Bonhomme Richard*, Captain Jones, and four other vessels, being in company at first, and the *Sensible* arrived at Boston the 2d of August. On the 13th of November following he set out for France again in the same frigate from Boston, and he says that a few days before the 24th, being at the last date on the Grand Bank of Newfound-

land, we spoke an American privateer, the General Lincoln, Captain Barnes. If the above-mentioned incident occurred at sea, it was probably on this occasion.

June 11, 1855. When I would go a-visiting, I find that I go off the fashionable street (not being inclined to change my dress) to where man meets man, and not polished shoe meets shoe.

What if we feel a yearning to which no breast answers. I walk alone. My heart is full. Feelings impede the current of my thoughts. I knock on the earth for my friend. I expect to meet him at every turn, but no friend appears, and perhaps none is dreaming of me. I am tired of frivolous society in which silence is forever the most natural and the best manners. I would fain walk on the deep waters, but my companions will only walk on shallows and puddles. I am naturally silent in the midst of twenty persons, from day to day, from year to year. I am rarely reminded of their presence. . . . One complains that I do not take his jokes. I took them before he had done uttering them, and went my way. One talks to me of his apples and pears, and I depart with my secret untold. His are not the apples that tempt me.

June 11, 1856. P. M. To Flint's Pond. It is very hot this P. M., and that peculiar stillness which belongs to summer noons now reigns in

the woods. I observe and appreciate the shade, as it were the shadow of each particular leaf on the ground. I think that this peculiar darkness of the shade, of the foliage as seen between you and the sky, is not accounted for merely by saying that we have not yet got accustomed to clothed trees, but the leaves are rapidly acquiring a darker green, are more and more opaque, and, beside, the sky is lit with the intensest light. It reminds me of the thunder-cloud and the dark eyelash of summer. Great cumuli are slowly drifting in the intensest blue sky, with glowing white borders. The red-eye sings incessant, and the more indolent yellow-throated vireo, and the creeper, and perhaps the redstart? or else it is the parti-colored warbler.

I perceive that scent from the young, sweet fern shoots and withered blossoms, which made the first settlers of Concord to faint on their journey.

See a bream's nest, two and one fourth feet in diameter, laboriously scooped out, and the surrounding bottom for a diameter of eight feet! comparatively white and clean, while all beyond is mud, leaves, etc., and a very large, green, and cupreous bream, with a red spot on the operculum, is poised over the centre, while half a dozen shiners are hovering about, apparently watching a chance to steal the spawn.

A partridge with young in the saw-mill brook path. Could hardly tell what kind of a creature it was at first, it made such a noise and fluttering amid the weeds and bushes. Finally ran off, with its body flat and wings somewhat spread.

June 11, 1858. P. M. To Assabet Bath. . . . Saw a painted turtle on the gravelly bank, . . . and suspected that she had just been laying (it was mid P. M.), so, examining the ground, I found the surface covered with loose lichens, etc., about one foot behind her, and, digging, found five eggs just laid, one and one-half or two inches deep, under one side. It is remarkable how firmly they are packed in the soil, rather hard to extract, though but just buried. . . .

Saw half a dozen *Emys insculpta* preparing to dig now at mid P. M. (and one or two had begun), at the most gravelly spot there, but they would not proceed while I watched, though I waited nearly half an hour, but either rested perfectly still, with their heads drawn partly in, or when a little further off, stood warily looking about, with their necks stretched out, turning their anxious-looking heads about. It seems a very earnest and pressing business they are upon. They have but a short season to do it in, and they run many risks.

Having succeeded in finding the *Emys picta's*

eggs, I thought I would look for the *Emys insculpta*'s at Abel Hosmer's rye field; so, looking carefully to see where the ground had been recently disturbed, I dug with my hand, and could directly feel the passage to the eggs. So I discovered two or three nests with their large and long eggs, five in one of them. It seems then, that if you look carefully soon after the eggs are laid in such a place, you can find the nests, though rain or even a dewy night might conceal the spot.

June 11, 1860. 10.30 A. M. Sail on the river. . . . The evergreens are now invested by the deciduous trees, and you get the full effect of their dark-green contrasting with the yellowish-green of the deciduous trees. . . .

I see from time to time a fish, scared by our sail, leap four to six feet through the air above the waves. . . .

Just within the edge of the wood, . . . I see a small painted turtle on its back, with its head stretched out as if to turn over. Surprised by the sight, I stooped to investigate the case. It drew in its head at once, but I noticed that its shell was partially empty. I could see through it from side to side, as it lay, its entrails having been extracted through large openings just before the hind legs. The dead leaves were flattened for a foot around where it had been oper

ated on, and were a little bloody. Its paunch lay on the leaves, and contained much vegetable matter, old cranberry leaves, etc. Judging by the striae, it was not more than five or six years old (or four or five). Its fore-parts were quite alive, its hind legs apparently dead, its inwards gone, apparently its spine perfect. The flies had entered it in numbers. What creature had done this which it would be difficult for a man to do? I thought of a skunk, weasel, mink, but I do not believe they could have got their snouts into so small a space as that in front of the hind legs, between the shells. The hind legs themselves had not been injured, nor the shell scratched. I thought it likely that this was done by some bird of the heron kind which has a long and powerful bill. This may account for the many dead turtles which I have found, and thought died from disease. Such is Nature, who gave one creature a taste or yearning for another's entrails as its favorite tid-bit! I thought the more of a bird, for just as we were shoving away from this isle, I heard a sound *just like a small dog barking hoarsely*, and looking up saw it was made by a bittern (*Ardea minor*), a pair of which were flapping over the meadows, and probably had a nest in some tussock thereabouts. No wonder the turtle is wary, for notwithstanding its horny shell, when it comes forth to lay its

eggs, it runs the risk of having its entrails plucked out. That is the reason that the box turtle, which lives entirely on the land, is made to shut itself up entirely within its shell, and I suspect that the mud tortoise only comes forth by night. What need the turtle has of some horny shield over those weaker parts, avenues to its entrails. I saw several of these painted turtles dead on the bottom.

Already I see those handsome fungi on the red maple leaves, yellow within, with a green centre, then the light red ring deepening to crimson.

On our way up, we eat our dinner at Rice's shore, and looked over the meadows covered there with waving sedge, light glaucous as it is bent by the wind, reflecting a grayish or light glaucous light from its under-side.

Looking at a hill-side of young trees, what various shades of green. The oaks generally are a light, tender, and yellowish-green. The white birches dark green now. The maples dark and silvery.

The white lily-pads, reddish, and showing their crimson under-sides from time to time, when the wind blows hardest.

June 12, 1851. Listen to music religiously, as if it were the last strain you might hear.

There would be this advantage in traveling in

your own country, even in your own neighborhood, that you would be so thoroughly prepared to understand what you saw. You would make fewer traveler's mistakes.

Is not he hospitable who entertains thoughts?

June 12, 1852. P. M. To Lupine Hill *via* Depot Field Brook. The meadows are yellow with golden senecio. Marsh speedwell, *Veronica scutellata*, lilac tinted, rather pretty. The mouse-ear forget-me-not, *Myosotis laxa*, has now extended its racemes (?) very much, and hangs over the edge of the brook. It is one of the most interesting minute flowers. It is the more beautiful for being small and unpretending; even flowers must be modest. The blue flag, *Iris versicolor*. Its buds are a dark, indigo-blue tip beyond the green calyx. It is rich, but hardly delicate and simple enough. A very handsome, sword-shaped leaf. The blue-eyed grass is one of the most beautiful of flowers. It might have been famous from Proserpine down. It will bear to be praised by poets.

The blue flag, notwithstanding its rich furniture, its fringed, re-curved parasols over its anthers, and its variously streaked and colored petals, is loose and coarse in its habit. How completely all character is expressed by flowers. This is a little too showy and gaudy, like some women's bonnets. Yet it belongs to the meadow

and ornaments it much. Ever it will be some obscure, small, and modest flower that will most please us.

How difficult, if not impossible, to do the things we have done, as fishing and camping out. They seem to me a little fabulous now. Boys are bathing at Hubbard's Bend, playing with a boat, I at the willows. The color of their bodies in the sun at a distance is pleasing, the not often seen flesh color. I hear the sound of their sport borne over the water. As yet we have not man in Nature. What a singular fact for an angel visitant to this earth to carry back in his note-book, that men were forbidden to expose their bodies under the severest penalties! A pale pink which the sun would soon tan. White man! There are no white men to contrast with the red and the black. They are of such colors as the weaver gives them. I wonder that the dog knows his master when he goes in to bathe, and does not stay by his clothes.

Small white-bellied (?) swallows in a row (a dozen) on the telegraph wire over the water by the bridge. This perch is little enough departure from unobstructed air to suit them. Plumming themselves. If you could furnish a perch aerial enough, even birds of paradise would alight. They do not alight on trees, methinks, unless on dead and bare boughs, but stretch a

wire over water, and they perch on it. This is among the phenomena that cluster about the telegraph. The swallow has a forked tail, and wings and tail are of about the same length. . . .

Some fields are almost wholly covered with sheep's sorrel, now turned red, its valves (?). It helps thus agreeably to paint the earth, contrasting even at a distance with the greener fields, blue sky, and dark or downy clouds. It is red, marbled, watered, mottled, or waved with greenish, like waving grain, three or four acres of it. To the farmer or grazier it is a troublesome weed, but to the landscape viewer, an agreeable red tinge laid on by the painter. I feel well into summer when I see this red tinge. It appears to be avoided by the cows. The petals of the side-saddle flower, fully expanded, hang down. How complex it is, what with flowers and leaves! It is a wholesome and interesting plant to me, the leaf especially.

. . . The glory of Dennis's lupines is departed, and the white now shows in abundance beneath them. So I cannot walk longer in those fields of Enna in which Proserpine amused herself gathering flowers.

The steam whistle at a distance sounds even like the hum of a bee in a flower. So man's works fall into Nature. The flies hum at mid-afternoon, as if peevish and weary at the length

of the days. The river is shrunk to summer width, on the sides smooth, whitish water, or rather it is the light from the pads ; in the middle, dark blue or slate, rippled. The color of the earth at a distance where a wood has been cut off is a reddish brown. . . .

It is day, and we have more of that same light that the moon sent us, not reflected now, but shining directly. The sun is a fuller moon. Who knows how much lighter day there may be !

June 12, 1853. P. M. To Bear Hill. . . .
The laurel probably by day after to-morrow.

The note of the wood-thrush answers to some cool, unexhausted morning vigor in the hearer.

The leaf of the rattlesnake plantain now surprises the walker amid the dry leaves on cool hill-sides in the woods ; of very simple form, but richly veined with longitudinal and transverse white veins. It looks like art.

Going up Pine Hill, disturbed a partridge and her brood. She ran in dishabille directly to me, within four feet, while her young, not larger than chickens just hatched, dispersed, flying along a foot or two from the ground, just over the bushes, for a rod or more. The mother kept close at hand to attract my attention, and mewed and clucked, and made a noise as when a hawk is in sight. She stepped about and held her head above the bushes, and clucked just like a

hen. What a remarkable instinct, that which keeps the young so silent, and prevents their peeping and betraying themselves! This wild bird will run almost any risk to save her young. The young, I believe, make a fine sound at first, in dispersing, something like a cherry-bird.

Visited the great orchis which I am waiting to have open completely. It is emphatically a flower (within gunshot of the hawk's nest); its great spike, six inches by two, of delicate, pale purple flowers which begin to expand at bottom, rises above and contrasts with the green leaves of the hellebore, skunk-cabbage, and ferns (by which its own leaves are concealed), in the cool shade of an alder swamp. It is the more interesting for its variety and the secluded situations in which it grows, owing to which it is seldom seen, not thrusting itself upon the observation of men. It is a pale purple, as if from growing in the shade. It is not remarkable in its stalk and leaves, which, indeed, are commonly concealed by other plants.

A wild moss rose in *Arethusa* Meadow where are *arethusas* lingering still. The side-saddle flowers are partly turned up now, and make a great show with their broad red petals flapping like saddle ears (?). . . . I visited my hawk's nest, and the young hawk was perched now four or five feet above the nest, still in the shade. It

will soon fly. So now in secluded pine woods the young hawks sit high on the edges of their nests, or on the twigs near by, in the shade, waiting for their pinions to grow, while their parents bring to them their prey. Their silence also is remarkable, not to betray themselves, nor will the old bird go to the nest while you are in sight. She pursues me half a mile when I withdraw.

The buds of young white oaks which have been frost-bitten are just pushing forth again. Are these such as were intended for next year, at the base of the leaf stalk?

June 12, 1854. P. M. To Walden. Clover now reddens the fields, grass in its prime. . . . With the roses now fairly begun, I associate summer heats. . . .

Hear the evergreen forest note, and see the bird on the top of a white pine, somewhat creeper-like along the boughs. A golden head, except a black streak from eyes, black throat, slate-colored back, forked tail, white beneath, *er te, ter ter te*. Another bird with *yellow* throat, near by, may have been of the other sex.

Scared a kingfisher on a bough over Walden. As he flew off, he hovered two or three times thirty or forty feet above the pond, and at last dove and apparently caught a fish with which he flew off low over the water to a tree.

Mountain laurel at the pond.

June 12, 1855. Down river to swamp east of Poplar Hill. I hear the toad still, which I have called *spray frog* falsely. He sits close to the edge of the water, and is hard to find. Hard to tell the direction though you may be within three feet. I detect him chiefly by the motion of the great swelling bubble on his throat. A peculiarly rich sprayey dreamer now at 2 P. M. How serenely it ripples over the water! What a luxury life is to him! I have to use a little geometry to detect him. Am surprised at my discovery at last, while C. sits by incredulous. Had turned our prow to shore to search. This rich sprayey note possesses all the shore. It diffuses itself far and wide over the water, and enters into every crevice of the noon, and you cannot tell whence it proceeds.

Young redwings now begin to fly feebly amid the button bushes, and the old ones chatter their anxiety.

In the thick swamp behind the hill I look at the vireo's nest which C. found. . . . He took one cow-bird's egg from it, and I now take the other which he left. There is no vireo's egg, and it is said they always desert their nest when there are two cow-bird's eggs laid in it.

Nuttall says of the cow-bird's egg: "If the egg be deposited in the nest alone, it is uniformly

forsaken;" — has seen "sometimes two of these eggs in the same nest, but in this case one of them commonly proves abortive," — "is almost oval, scarcely larger than that of the bluebird." He says it is "thickly sprinkled with points and confluent touches of olive brown, of two shades, somewhat more numerous at the greater end, on a white ground tinged with green. But in some of these eggs the ground is almost pure white, and the spots nearly black."

June 12, 1859. P. M. To Gowing's Swamp. I am struck with the beauty of the sorrel now. What a wholesome red! It is densest in parallel lines, according to the plowing or cultivation. There is hardly a more agreeable sight at this season.

June 12, 1860. P. M. Up Assabet. I find several *Emys insculpta* nests and eggs, and see two painted turtles going inland to lay, at 2 P. M. At this moment these turtles are on their way inland, to lay their eggs, all over the State, warily drawing in their heads and waiting when you come by. Here is a painted turtle just a rod inland, its back all covered with the fragments of green leaves blown off and washed up yesterday, which now line the shore. It has come out through this wrack. As the river has gone down, these green leaves mark the bank in lines, like saw-dust.

June 13, 1851. Walked to Walden last night (moon not quite full). I noticed night before last from Fair Haven how valuable was some water by moonlight, like the river and Fair Haven, though far away, reflecting the light with a faint glimmering sheen, as in the spring of the year. The water shines with an inward light, like a heaven on earth. The silent depth and serenity and majesty of water! Strange that men should distinguish gold and diamonds, when these precious elements are so common. I saw a distant river by moonlight, making no noise, yet flowing, as by day, still to the sea, like melted silver, reflecting the moonlight. Far away it lay encircling the earth. How far away it may look in the night! Even from a low hill, miles away down in the valley! As far off as Paradise and the delectable country! There is a certain glory attends on water by night. By it the heavens are related to the earth, undistinguishable from a sky beneath you. After I reached the road, I saw the moon suddenly reflected from a pool, the earth, as it were, dissolved beneath my feet. The magical moon, with attendant stars, suddenly looking up with mild lustre from a window in the dark earth. I observed also, the same night, a halo about my shadow in the moonlight, which I referred to the accidentally lighter color of the surrounding

surface, but on transferring it to the darkest patches I saw the halo there equally. It serves to make the outline of the shadow more distinct.

But now for last night. A few fire-flies in the meadow. Do they shine, though invisibly, by day? Is their candle lighted by day? — It is not night-fall till the whippoorwills begin to sing.

As I entered the Deep Cut, I was affected by beholding the first faint reflection of genuine, unmixed moonlight on the eastern sand-bank, while the horizon, yet red with day, was tinging the western side. What an interval between these two lights! The light of the moon, in what age of the world does that fall upon the earth? The moonlight was as the earliest and dewy morning light, and the daylight tinge reminded me much more of the night. There were the old and new dynasties contrasted, and an interval between, not recognized in history, which time could not span. Nations have flourished in that light.

When I had climbed the sand-bank on the left, I felt the warmer current or stratum of air on my cheek, like a blast from a furnace.

The white stems of the pines which reflected the weak light, standing thick and close together, while their lower branches were gone, reminded me that the pines are only longer grasses, which

rise to a chaffy head, and we the insects that crawl between them. They are particularly grass-like.

I heard the partridge drumming to-night as late as nine o'clock. What a singularly space-penetrating and filling sound! Why am I never nearer to its source?

We do not commonly live our life out and full; we do not fill all our extremities with our blood; we do not inspire and expire fully and entirely enough, so that the wave, the comber of each inspiration, shall break upon our extremest shores, rolling till it meets the sand which bounds us, and the sound of the surf come back to us. Might not a bellows assist us to breathe? . . . Why do we not let on the flood, raise the gates, and set all our wheels in motion? He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. Employ your senses.

The newspapers tell us of news not to be named even with that in its own kind, which an observing man can pick up in a solitary walk, as if it gained some importance and dignity by its publicness. Do we need to be advertised each day that such is still the routine of life?

The tree-toad's, too, is a summer-sound. I hear, just as the night sets in, faint notes from time to time, from some sparrow (?) falling asleep, a vesper hymn; and later, in the woods,

the chuckling, rattling sound of some unseen bird on the near trees. — The night-hawk booms wide awake.

As I approached the pond down Hubbard's path, after coming out of the woods into a warmer air, I saw the shimmering of the moon on its surface; and in the near, now flooded cove, the water bugs, now darting, circling about, made streaks or curves of light. The moon's inverted pyramid of shimmering light commenced about twenty rods off, like so much micaceous sand. But I was startled to see midway in the dark water, a bright flame like more than phosphorescent light, crowning the crests of the wavelets, which at first I mistook for fire-flies. . . . It had the appearance of a pure smokeless flame, half a dozen inches long, rising from the water and bending flickeringly along its surface. I thought of St. Elmo's lights and the like. But coming near to the shore of the pond itself, these flames increased, and I saw that even this was so many broken reflections of the moon's disk, though one would have said they were of an intenser light than the moon herself. From contrast with the surrounding water they were. Standing up close to the shore and nearer the rippled surface, I saw the reflections of the moon sliding down the watery concave, like so many lustrous burnished coins poured from a bag with

inexhaustible lavishness, and the lambent flames on the surface were much multiplied, seeming to slide along a few inches with each wave before they were extinguished ; and I saw from farther and farther off, they gradually merged in the general sheen, which in fact was made up of a myriad little mirrors reflecting the disk of the moon with equal brightness to an eye rightly placed. The pyramid or sheaf of light which we see springing from near where we stand is in fact only that portion of the shimmering surface which our eye takes in. To a myriad eyes suitably placed, the whole surface of the pond would be seen to shimmer, or rather it would be seen, as the waves turned up their mirrors, to be covered with those bright flame-like reflections of the moon's disk, like a myriad candles everywhere issuing from the waves. . . .

As I climbed the hill again toward my old bean-field, I listened to the ancient, familiar, immortal, cricket sound under all others, hearing at first some distinct chirps. But when these ceased, I was aware of the general earth song which I had not before perceived, and amid which these were only taller flowers in a bed, and I wondered if behind or beneath this there was not some other chant yet more universal. Why do we not hear when this begins in the spring? and when it ceases in the fall? or is it

too gradual? — After getting into the road I have no thought to record. All the way home the walk is comparatively barren.

June 13, 1852. 3 P. M. To Conantum. . . . The river has a summer mid-day look, smooth, with green shores, and shade from the trees on its banks.

What a sweetness fills the air now in low grounds or meadows, reminding me of times when I went strawberrying years ago. It is as if all meadows were filled with some sweet mint.

The *Dracaena borealis* (Bigelow), *Clintonia borealis* (Gray), amid the Solomon's-seals in Hubbard's Grove Swamp, a very neat and handsome liliaceous flower, with three large, regular, spotless green convallaria leaves, making a triangle from the root, and sometimes a fourth from the scape, linear, with four drooping, greenish-yellow, bell-shaped (?) flowers. It is a handsome and perfect flower, though not high-colored. I prefer it to some more famous. But Gray should not have named it from the Governor of New York. What is he to the lovers of flowers in Massachusetts? If named after a man, it must be a man of flowers. Rhode Island may as well name the flowers after her governors as New York. Name your canals and railroads after Clinton, if you please, but his name is not associated with flowers.

The buckbean grows in Conant's meadow. Lambkill is out. I remember with what delight I used to discover this flower in dewy mornings. All things in this world must be seen with the morning dew on them, must be seen with youthful, early opened, hopeful eyes.

Saw four cunning little woodchucks, about one-third grown, that live under Conant's old house, nibbling the short grass. Mistook one for a piece of rusty iron.

The *Smilax herbacea*, carrion flower, a rank green vine, with long peduncled umbels, small greenish or yellowish flowers, and tendrils, just opening, at the Miles swamp. It smells exactly like a dead rat in the wall, and apparently attracts flies like carrion. I find small gnats in it. A very remarkable odor. A single minute flower, in an umbel, open, will scent a whole room. Nature imitates all things in flowers. They are at once the most beautiful and the ugliest objects, the most fragrant, and the most offensive to the nostrils.

The great leaves of the bass attract one now, six inches in diameter.

The delicate maiden-hair fern forms a cup or dish, very delicate and graceful. Beautiful, too, its glossy black stem and its wave-edged, fruited leaflets.

I hear the feeble, plaintive note of young

bluebirds, just trying their wings or getting used to them. Young robins peep.

I think I know four kinds of cornel beside the dogwood and bunchberry. One now in bloom, with rather small leaves, which have a smooth, silky feeling beneath, and a greenish gray spotted stem, old stocks all gray (*Cornus alternifolia?* or *sericea?*). The broad-leaved cornel in Laurel Glen, yet green in the bud (*Cornus circinata?*). The small-leaved cornel, with a small cyme or corymb as late as the last (*Cornus paniculata*), and the red osier by the river (*Cornus stolonifera*), which I have not seen this year.

June 13, 1853. 9 A. M. To Orchis Swamp. — I find that there are two young hawks. One has left the nest, and is perched on a small maple seven or eight rods distant. It appears much smaller than the former one. I am struck by its large naked head, so vulture-like, and large eyes, as if the vulture's were an inferior stage through which the hawk passed. Its feet, too, are large, remarkably developed, by which it holds to its perch securely, like an old bird, before its wings can perform their office. It has a buff breast, striped with dark brown. P——, when I told him of this nest, said he would like to carry one of his rifles down there. But I told him that I should be sorry to have

them killed, I would rather save one of these hawks than have a hundred hens and chickens. It was worth more to see them soar, especially now that they are so rare in the landscape. It is easy to buy eggs, but not to buy hen-hawks. My neighbors would not hesitate to shoot the last pair of hen-hawks in the town to save a few of their chickens! But such economy is narrow and groveling. I would rather never taste chickens' meat nor hens' eggs than never to see a hawk sailing through the upper air again. The sight is worth incomparably more than a chicken soup or boiled egg. So we exterminate the deer and substitute the hog. It was amusing to observe the swaying to and fro of the young hawk's head to counterbalance the gentle action of the bough in the wind.

Violets appear to be about done generally. Four-leaved loosestrife just out; also, the smooth wild rose yesterday. The pogonia at Forget-me-not Brook.

What was that rare and beautiful bird in the dark woods under the Cliffs, with black above and white spots and bars, a large triangular blood-red spot on breast, and sides of breast and beneath, white? Note, a warble, like the oriole, but softer and sweeter. It was quite tame. Probably a rose-breasted grossbeak. At first I thought it was a chewink, as it sat side

ways to me, and was going to call Sophia to look at it, but then it turned its breast full toward me, and I saw the large, triangular, blood-red spot occupying the greater part of it. . . . It is a memorable event to meet with so rare a bird. Birds answer to flowers, both in their abundance and their rareness. The meeting with a rare and beautiful bird like this is like meeting with some rare and beautiful flower, which you may never find again perchance, like the great purple-fringed orchis, at least. How much it enhances the wildness and the richness of the forest.

June 13, 1854. 2 P. M. By boat to Bittern Cliff, and so to Lee's Cliff. I hear the muttering of thunder and see a dark cloud in the horizon; am uncertain how far up stream I shall get.

Now in shallow places near the bends the large and conspicuous spikes of the broad-leaved potamogeton rise thickly above the water. . . .

I see the yellow water ranunculus in dense fields now in some places on the side of the stream, two or three inches above water, and many gone to seed.

The flowering fern is reddish and yellowish-green on the meadows.

It is so warm that I stop to drink wherever there is a spring.

The little globular, drooping, reddish buds of the *Chimaphila umbellata* (*pipsissewa*) are now very pretty.

How beautiful the solid cylinders of the lamb kill now just before sunset, small ten-sided rosy-crimson basins, about two inches above the recurved, drooping, dry capsules of last year, and sometimes those of the year before, two inches lower.

When I have stayed out thus till late, many miles from home, and have heard a cricket beginning to chirp louder near me in the grass, I have felt that I was not far from home after all. Began to be weaned from my village home.

I see over the bream nests little schools of countless minute minnows (can they be young breams?), the breams being still in their nests.

It is surprising how thickly-strewn our soil is with arrow heads. I never see the surface broken in sandy places but I think of them. I find them on all sides, not only in corn, grain, potato, and bean fields, but in pastures and woods, by woodchucks' holes and pigeon beds, and, as to-night, in a pasture where a restless cow had pawed the ground.

Is not the *Rosa lucida* paler than the *nitida*?

June 13, 1860. 2 P. M. To Martial Miles's *via* Clamshell. I see at Martial Miles's two young woodchucks taken sixteen days ago, when

they were perhaps a fortnight old. There were four in all, and they were dug out by the aid of a dog. The mother successively *pushed out* her little ones to the dog to save herself, and one was at once killed by the dog. These two are now nearly one third grown. They have found a hole within the house, into which they run, and whither they have carried shavings, etc., and made a nest. Thence they run out doors and feed close about the house, lurking behind barrels, etc. They eat yarrow, clover, catnip, etc., and are fed with milk and bread. They do not drink the milk like a dog or a cat, but simply suck it, taking the sharp edge of the shallow tin dish in their mouths. They are said to spit like a cat. They eat bread sitting upright on their haunches, and holding it in their forepaws just like a squirrel. That is their common and natural mode of eating. They are as gray (hoary) as the old, or grayer. Mrs. Miles says they sleep on their heads, *i. e.*, curling their heads under them; also, that they can back as straight into their hole as if they went head foremost. I saw a full-grown one this P. M. which stood so erect and still (its paws hanging down and inobvious as its ears) that it might be mistaken for a short and very stout stake.

This P. M. the streets are strewn with the leaves of the button-wood, which are still fall-

ing. Looking up, I see many more half-formed leaves hanging wilted or withered. I think that the leaves of these trees were especially injured by the cold wind of the 10th, and are just now falling in consequence. I can tell when I am under a button-wood by the number of leaves on the ground. With the other trees it was mainly a mechanical injury, done rather by the wind than the cold, but the tender shoots of this tree were killed.

June 14, 1840.

“In glory and in joy,
Behind his plough, upon the mountain side.”

(Wordsworth.)

I seemed to see the woods wave on a hundred mountains, as I read these lines, and the distant rustling of their leaves reached my ear.

June 14, 1851. Full moon last night. Set out on a walk to Conantum at 7 P. M. A serene evening, the sun going down behind clouds. A few white or slightly-shaded piles of clouds floating in the eastern sky, but a broad, clear, mellow cope left for the moon to rise into. An evening for poets to describe. As I proceed along the back road I hear the lark still singing in the meadow, and the bobolink, the golden robin on the elms, and the swallows twittering about the barns. All Nature is in an expectant attitude. Before Goodwin's house at the open-

ing of the Sudbury road, the swallows are diving at a tortoise-shell cat who curvets rather awkwardly as if she did not know whether to be scared or not. And now, the sun having buried himself in the low cloud in the west and hung out his crimson curtain, I hear, while sitting by the wall, the sound of the stake-driver at a distance, like that made by a man pumping in a neighboring farm-yard, watering his cattle, or like chopping wood before his door on a frosty morning, and I can imagine it like driving a stake in a meadow. The pumper. I immediately went in search of the bird, but after going one third of a mile, it did not sound much nearer, and the two parts of the sound did not appear to proceed from the same place. What is the peculiarity of these sounds which penetrate so far on the key-note of Nature? At last I got near to the brook in the meadow behind Hubbard's wood, but I could not tell if it were farther or nearer than that. When I got within half a dozen rods of the brook, it ceased, and I heard it no more. I suppose that I scared it. As before I was farther off than I thought, so now I was nearer than I thought. It is not easy to understand how so small a creature can make so loud a sound by merely sucking or throwing out water with pump-like lungs. It was a sound as of gulping water.

Where my path crosses the brook in the meadow there is a singularly sweet scent in the heavy air where the brakes grow, the fragrance of the earth, as if the dew were a distillation of the fragrant essences of Nature.

And now, as I enter the embowered willow causeway, my senses are captivated again by a sweet fragrance. I know not if it be from a particular plant, or all together, sweet-scented vernal grass, or sweet briar. Now the sun is fairly gone, I hear the dreaming toad (?), and the whippoorwill from some darker wood, and the cuckoo. It is not far from eight. The song-sparrows sing quite briskly among the willows as if it were spring again, the blackbird's harsher note resounds over the meadow, and the veery's comes up from the wood. Fishes are dimpling the surface of the river, seizing the insects which alight. A solitary fisherman in his boat inhabits the scene. As I ascended the hill, I found myself in a cool, fragrant, dewy, up-country, mountain, morning air. The moon was now seen rising over Fair Haven, and at the same time reflected in the river, pale and white, like a silvery cloud barred with a cloud. In Conant's orchard I hear the faint cricket-like song of a sparrow, saying its vespers, as if it were a link between the cricket and the bird. The robin sings now, though the moon shines silvery, and the veery jingles its trill.

I hear the fresh and refreshing sound of falling water as I have heard it in New Hampshire. It is a sound we do not commonly hear.

How moderate, deliberate is Nature, how gradually the shades of night gather and deepen, giving man ample leisure to bid farewell to day, conclude his day's affairs, and prepare for slumber. The twilight seems out of proportion to the length of the day.

I see, indistinctly, oxen asleep in the fields, silent, in majestic slumber, reclining statuesque, Egyptian, like the Sphinx. What solid rest! How their heads are supported!

From Conant's summit I hear as many as fifteen whippoorwills, or whip-or-I-wills, at once, the succeeding cluck sounding strangely foreign, like a hewer at work elsewhere.

How sweet and encouraging it is to hear the sound of some artificial music from the midst of woods or from the top of a hill at night, borne on the breeze from some distant farm-house, the human voice, or a flute. That is a civilization one can endure, worth having. I could go about the world listening for the strains of music. Men use this gift but sparingly, nevertheless. What should we think of a bird which had the gift of song, but used it only once in a dozen years! like the plant which blossoms only once in a century.

Peabody says that the night-hawk retires to rest about the time the whippoorwill begins its song. The whippoorwill begins now at half-past seven. I hear the night-hawk after nine o'clock. He says the latter flies low in the evening, but it also flies high, as it must needs do to make the booming sound.

Not much before ten o'clock does the moon-light night begin, when man is asleep and day fairly forgotten. Then is the beauty of moon-light seen upon lonely pastures where cattle are silently feeding. Then let me walk in a diversified country of hill and dale, with heavy woods on one side, and copses and scattered trees enough to give me shadows. As I return, a mist is on the river, which is thus taken into the womb of Nature again.

June 14, 1852. Saw a wild rose from the cars in Weston. The early red roses are out in gardens at home.

June 14, 1853. P. M. To White Pond. Heard the first locust from amid the shrubs by the roadside. He comes with heat.

Snake sloughs are found nowadays, bleached and whitish.

I observed the cotton of aphides on the alders yesterday and to-day. How regularly these phenomena appear, even the stains or spots or galls on leaves, as that bright yellow on blackberry

leaves and those ring spots on maple leaves I see to-day, exactly the same pattern with last year's, and the crimson frosting on the black birch leaves I saw the other day. Then there are the huckleberry apples and the large green puffs on the paniced andromeda, and also I see now the very light or whitish solid and juicy apples on the swamp pink with a fungus-like smell when broken.

Erigeron strigosum. Some white, some purplish, common now, and daisy-like. I put it rather early on the 9th.

Instead of the white lily which requires mud or the sweet flag, here grows the blue flag in the water, thinly about the shore. The color of the flower harmonizes singularly with the water. With our boat's prow to the shore, we sat half an hour this evening, listening to the bull-frogs. What imperturbable fellows! One sits perfectly still behind some blades of grass while the dog is chasing others within two feet. Some are quite handsome, large, and spotted. We see here and there light-colored, greenish, or white spots on the bottom, where a fish—a bream, perhaps—has picked away all the dead wood and leaves for her nest over a space of eighteen inches or more. Young bream, from one to three inches long, light-colored and transparent, are swimming

about, and here and there a leech in the shallow water, moving as serpents are represented to do. Large devil's needles are buzzing back and forth. They skim along the edge of the blue flags, apparently quite round this cove or further, like hen-harriers beating the bush for game. And now comes a humming-bird, humming from the woods, and alights on the blossom of a blue flag. The bull-frogs begin with one or two notes, and with each peal add another trill to their trump, *er roonk* — er-er-roonk — er-er-er-roonk, etc. I am amused to hear one after another, and then an unexpectedly deep and confident bass, as if he had charged himself with more wind than the rest. And now, as if by a general agreement, they all trump together, making a deafening noise. Sometimes one jumps up a foot out of water in the midst of these concerts. What are they about? Suddenly a tree-toad in the overhanging woods begins, and another answers, and another, with loud ranging notes, such as I never heard before, and in three minutes they are all silent again. A red-eye sings on a tree top, and a cuckoo is heard from the wood. These are the evening sounds.

As we look over the water now, the opposite woods are seen dimly through what appears not so much the condensing dew and mist as the dry

haziness of the afternoon now settled and condensed. The woods on the opposite shore have not the distinctness they had an hour before, but perhaps a more agreeable dimness, a sort of gloaming, or settling and thickening of the haze over the water, which melts tree into tree, they being no longer bright and distinct, and masses them agreeably, a bluish mistiness. This appears to be an earlier gloaming before sunset. . . .

This seems the true hour to be abroad, sauntering far from home. Your thoughts being already turned toward home, your walk in one sense ended, you are in that favorable frame of mind described by De Quincey, open to great impressions, and you see those rare sights with the unconscious side of the eye, which you could not see by a direct gaze before. Then the dews begin to descend in your mind, and its atmosphere is strained of all impurities. Home is farther away than ever ; here is home. The beauty of the world impresses you. There is a coolness in your mind as in a well. Life is too grand for ripples. The wood-thrush launches forth his evening strains from the midst of the pines. I admire the moderation of this master. There is nothing tumultuous in his song. He launches forth one strain of pure, unmatchable melody, and then he pauses and gives the hearer and himself time to digest this, and then another and

another at suitable intervals. Men talk of the rich song of other birds, the thrasher, mocking-bird, nightingale. But I doubt, I doubt. They know not what they say. There is as great an interval between the thrasher and the wood-thrush as between Thomson's "Seasons" and Homer. The sweetness of the day crystallizes in this morning coolness.

June 14, 1854. Caught a locust, properly harvest fly, drumming on a birch, which — and — think like the *septendecim*, except that ours has not red eyes, but black ones. Harris says of the other kind, the dog-day cicada (*canicularis*) or harvest fly, that it begins to be heard invariably at the beginning of dog days; that he has heard it for many years in succession, with few exceptions, on the 25th of July.

June 14, 1857. [Plymouth.] B. M. W. — tells me that he learns from pretty good authority that Webster once saw the sea serpent. It seems it was first seen in the bay between Manomet and Plymouth Beach by a perfectly reliable witness (many years ago) who was accustomed to look out on the sea with his glass every morning the first thing, as regularly as he ate his breakfast. One morning he saw this monster, with a head somewhat like a horse's, raised some six feet above the water, and his body, the size of a cask, trailing behind. He was career

ing over the bay, chasing the mackerel, which ran ashore in their fright, and were washed up and died in great numbers. The story is that Webster had appointed to meet some Plymouth gentlemen at Manomet and spend the day fishing with them. After the fishing was over he set out to return to Duxbury in his sail-boat with Peterson, as he had come, and on the way they saw the sea serpent, which answered to the common account of this creature. It passed directly across the bows only six or seven rods off, and then disappeared. On the sail homeward, Webster, having had time to reflect on what had occurred, at length said to Peterson, "For God's sake never say a word about this to any one, for if it should be known that I have seen the sea serpent, I should never hear the last of it, but, wherever I went, should have to tell the story to every one I met." So it has not leaked out till now.

W—— also tells me (and E. W—— confirms it, his father having probably been of the party) that many years ago a party of Plymouth gentlemen rode round by the shore to the Gurnet, and there had a high time. When they set out to return, they left one of their number, a General Winslow, asleep, and, as they rode along homeward, amused themselves with conjecturing what he would think when he waked up and found

himself alone. When at length he awoke, he comprehended his situation at once, and, being somewhat excited by the wine he had drunk, he mounted his horse and rode along the shore to Saquish Head in the opposite direction. From here to Plymouth Beach is about a mile and a quarter, but, it being low tide, he waded his horse as far as the Beacon, north of the channel at the entrance to Plymouth Harbor, about three quarters of a mile, and then boldly swam him across to the end of Plymouth Beach, about half a mile further, notwithstanding a strong current. Having landed safely, he whipped up and soon reached the town, having come only about eight miles, and having ample time to warm and dry himself at the tavern before his companions arrived, who had at least twenty miles to ride about through Marshfield and Duxbury. When they found him sitting by the tavern fire, they at first thought it was his ghost.

June 14, 1859. P. M. To Flint's Pond. — Pout's nest with a straight entrance some twenty inches long and a simple round nest at end. The young, just hatched, all head, light colored, under a mass of weedy hummocks which is all under water.

The rose-breasted grossbeak is common now in the Flint's Pond woods. It is not at all shy, and our richest singer, perhaps, after the wood-

thrush. The rhythm is very like that of the tanager, but the strain is perfectly clear and sweet. One sits on the bare dead twig of a chestnut high over the road at Gourgas wood, and over my head, and sings clear and loud at regular intervals, the strain about ten or fifteen seconds long, rising and swelling to the end with various modulations. Another, singing in emulation, regularly answers it, alternating with it, from a distance, at least a quarter of a mile off. It sings thus long at a time, and I leave it singing there, regardless of me.

June 14, 1860. P. M. To 2d Division. . . .
The white water ranunculus is abundant in the brook, out, say a week, and well open in the sunshine. It is a pretty white flower, with yellow centre, seen above the dark-brown green leaves in the rapid water, its peduncle recurved so as to present the flower erect half an inch to an inch above the surface, while the buds are submerged.

June 15, 1840. I stood by the river to-day, considering the forms of the elms reflected in the water. For every oak and birch, too, growing on the hill-top, as well as for these elms and willows, there is a graceful, ethereal, and ideal tree making down from the roots, and sometimes Nature in high tides brings her mirror to its foot and makes it visible. Anxious Nature sometimes reflects from pools and puddles the objects which

our groveling senses may fail to see relieved against the sky, with the pure ether for background.

It would be well if we saw ourselves as in perspective always, impressed with distinct outline on the sky, side by side with the shrubs on the river's brim. So let our life stand to heaven as some fair sun-lit tree against the western horizon, and by sunrise be planted on some eastern hill to glisten in the first rays of the dawn.

June 15, 1851. Saw the first wild rose to-day. The white weed has suddenly appeared, the clover gives whole fields a rich and florid appearance. The rich red and the sweet-scented white. The fields are blushing with the red as the western sky at evening.

The blue-eyed grass, well-named, looks up to heaven, and the yarrow, with its persistent dry stalks and heads, is now ready to blossom again. The dry stems and heads of last year's tansy stand high above the new green leaves.

I sit in the shade of the pines to hear a wood-thrush at noon; the ground smells of dry leaves; the heat is oppressive. The bird begins in a low strain, *i. e.*, it first delivers a strain on a lower key, then, a moment after, another a little higher, then another still varied from the others, no two successive strains alike, but either ascending or descending. He confines himself to his few

notes in which he is unrivaled, as if his kind had learned this and no more, anciently.

I perceive, as formerly, a white froth dripping from the pitch pines just at the base of the new shoots. It has no taste.

The pollywogs in the pond are now full-tailed.

The hickory leaves are blackened by a recent frost, which reminds me that this is near their northern limit.

The rapidity with which the grass grows is remarkable. The 25th of May I walked to the hills in Wayland, and when I returned across lots do not remember that I had much occasion to think of the grass, or to go round any fields to avoid treading on it. But just a week afterward, at Worcester, it was high and waving in the fields, and I was to some extent confined to the road, and the same was the case here. Apparently in a month you get from fields which you can cross without hesitation, to haying time. It has grown you hardly know when, be the weather what it may, sunshine or storm.

I start up a solitary woodcock in the shade of some copse; it goes off with a startled, rattling, hurried note.

After walking by night several times, I now walk by day, but I am not aware of any crowning advantage in it. I see small objects better, but it does not enlighten me any. The day is more trivial.

What a careful gardener Nature is! She does not let the sun come out suddenly with all his intensity after rain and cloudy weather, but graduates the change to suit the tenderness of plants.

I see the tall crowfoot now in the meadows, *Ranunculus acris*, with a smooth stem. I do not notice the *bulbosus* which was so common a fortnight ago. The rose-colored flowers of the *Kalmia angustifolia*, lambkill, just opened and opening. The *Convallaria bifolia* growing stale in the woods. The *Hieracium venosum*, veiny-leaved hawk-weed, with its yellow blossoms, in the woodland path. The *Hypoxys erecta*, yellow Bethlehem star, where there is a thick wiry grass in open paths, might well be called yellow-eyed grass. The *Pyrola asarifolia*, with its pagoda-like stem of flowers, *i. e.*, broad-leaved winter-green. The *Trientalis Americana*, like last, in the woods, with its star-like white flower and pointed, whorled leaves. The prunella, too, is in blossom, and the rather delicate *Thesium umbellatum*, a white flower. The Solomon's-seal, with a greenish, drooping raceme of flowers at the top, I do not identify.

I find I postpone all actual intercourse with my friends to a certain real intercourse which takes place commonly when we are actually at distance from one another.

June 15, 1852. Yesterday we smelt the sea strongly. The sea breeze alone made the day tolerable. This morning, a shower. The robin only sings the louder for it. He is inclined to sing in foul weather.

To Clematis Brook. 1.30 P. M.

Very warm. This melting weather makes a stage in the year. The crickets creak louder and more steadily. The bull-frogs croak in earnest. The dry z-ing of the locust is heard. The drouth begins. Bathing cannot be omitted. The conversation of all boys in the streets is whether they will or will not, or who will, go in a-swimming. . . . You lie with open windows and hear the sounds in the streets. The seringo sings now at noon on a post, has a light streak over eye. The autumnal dandelion. *Leontodon* or *Apargia*. *Erigeron integrifolium* or *strigosum*, i. e., narrow-leaved daisy fleabane of Gray, very common, like a white aster.

Men are inclined to be amphibious, to sympathize with fishes now. I desire to get wet, saturated with water. The North River, Assabet, by the old stone bridge, affords the best bathing-place I think of, — a pure, sandy, uneven bottom, with a swift current, a grassy bank, and overhanging maples, transparent water, deep enough, where you can see every fish in it. Though you stand still, you feel the rippling current about you.

Young robins, dark-speckled, and the pigeon woodpecker flies up from the ground and darts away.

The farm-houses under their shady trees look as if their inhabitants were taking their siesta at this hour. I pass Baker's in the rear through the open pitch-pine wood. . . . No scouring of tubs or cans now. They eat and all are gone to sleep preparing for an early tea, excepting the indefatigable, never-resting hoers in the cornfield, who have carried a jug of molasses and water to the field, and will wring their shirts to-night. I shall ere long hear the horn blow for their early tea. The wife or the hired Irish woman steps to the door and blows the long tin horn, a cheering sound to the laborers in the field.

The motive of the laborer should be not to get his living, to get a good job, but to perform well a certain work. A town must pay its engineers so well that they shall not feel they are working for low ends, as for a livelihood mainly, but for scientific ends. Do not hire a man who does your work for money, but him who does it for love, and pay him well.

On Mount Misery, panting with heat, looking down the river. The haze an hour ago reached to Wachusett; now it obscures it.

Methinks there is a male and female shore to the river, one abrupt, the other flat and mead

owy. Have not all streams this contrast more or less, — on the one hand eating into the bank, on the other depositing their sediment?

The year is in its manhood now. The very river looks warm, and there is none of that light celestial blue seen in far reaches in the spring.

I see fields a mile distant reddened with sorrel.

The very sight of distant water is refreshing, though a bluish steam appears to rest on it.

How refreshing the sound of the smallest waterfall in hot weather. I sit by that on Clematis Brook, and listen to its music. The very sight of this half stagnant pond-hole drying up and leaving bare mud, with the pollywogs and turtles making off in it, is agreeable and encouraging to behold, as if it contained the very seeds of life, the liquor, rather, boiled down. The foulest water will bubble purely. They speak to our blood, even these stagnant, slimy pools. Even this water has, no doubt, its falls nobler than Montmorenci, grander than Niagara, in the course of its circulations.

Cattle walk along now in a brook or ditch for coolness, lashing their tails, and browse the edges; or they stand concealed for shade amid thick bushes. How perfectly acquainted they are with man.

I hear the scream of a great hawk sailing

with a ragged wing against the high wood side, apparently to scare his prey, and so detect it, shrill, harsh, fitted to excite terror in sparrows, and to issue from his split and curved bill, spit with force from his mouth with an undulatory quaver imparted to it from his wings or motion as he flies. I see his open bill the while against the sky. A hawk's ragged wing will grow whole again, but so will not a poet's.

Here at Well Meadow head I see the fringed purple orchis, unexpectedly beautiful, though a pale lilac purple, a large spike of purple flowers. I find two [of the same species], the *grandiflora* of Bigelow and *fimbriata* of Gray. Bigelow thinks it the most beautiful of all the orchises. . . . Why does it grow there only, far in a swamp, remote from public view? It is somewhat fragrant, reminding me of the lady's slipper. Is it not significant that some rare and delicate and beautiful flowers should be found only in unfrequented wild swamps? . . . Yet I am not sure but this is a fault in the flower. It is not quite perfect in all its parts. A beautiful flower must be simple, not spiked. It must have a fair stem and leaves. The stem is rather naked, and the leaves are for shade and moisture. It is fairest seen rising from amid brakes and hellebore, its lower part, or rather naked stem, concealed. Where the most beautiful wild

flowers grow, there man's spirit is fed and poets grow. It cannot be high-colored, growing in the shade. Nature has taken no pains to exhibit it, and few that bloom are ever seen by mortal eyes.

There are few really cold springs. How few men can be believed when they say one is cold. I go out of my way to the Boiling Spring. It is as cold as the coldest well water. What a treasure is such a spring! Who *divined* it?

8 P. M. On river. No moon. A deafening sound from toads, and intermittingly from bull-frogs. What I have thought to be frogs prove to be toads, sitting by thousands along the shore, and trilling short and loud, not so long a quaver as in the spring. And I have not heard them in those pools, now indeed mostly dried up, where I heard them in the spring. (I do not know what to think of my midsummer frog now.) The bull-frogs are very loud, of various degrees of baseness and sonorousness, answering each other across the river with two or three grunting croaks. They are not now so numerous as the toads. It is candle light. The fishes leap. The meadows sparkle with the coppery light of fire-flies. The evening star, multiplied by undulating water, is like bright sparks of fire continually ascending. The reflections of the trees are grandly indistinct. There is a low mist slightly enlarging the river, through

which the arches of the stone bridge are just visible, as in a vision. The mist is singularly bounded, collected here while there is none there, close up to the bridge on one side and none on the other, depending apparently on currents of air. . . . There is a low crescent of northern light, and shooting stars from time to time. . . . I paddle with a bough, the Nile boatman's oar, which is rightly pliant, and you do not labor much.

June 15, 1853. P. M. To Trillium Woods. Clover now in its prime. What more luxuriant than a clover field? The poorest soil that is covered with it looks incomparably fertile. This is perhaps the most characteristic feature of June, resounding with the hum of insects, such a blush on the fields. The rude health of the sorrel cheek has given place to the blush of clover. Painters are wont, in their pictures of Paradise, to strew the field too thickly with flowers. There should be moderation in all things. Though we love flowers we do not want them so thick under our feet that we cannot walk without treading on them. But a clover field in bloom is some excuse for them. . . .

Here are many wild roses northeast of Trillium Woods. We are liable to underrate this flower, on account of its commonness. Is it not

the queen of our flowers? How ample and high-colored its petals, glancing half concealed from its own green bowers. There is a certain noble and delicate civility about it, not wildness. It is properly the type of the rosaceæ, or flowers, among others, of most wholesome fruits. It is at home in the garden, as readily cultivated as apples. It is the pride of June. In summing up its attractions I should mention its rich color, size, and form, the rare beauty of its bud, its fine fragrance and the beauty of the entire shrub, not to mention the almost innumerable varieties it runs into. I bring home the buds ready to expand, put them into a pitcher of water, and the next morning they open, and fill my chamber with fragrance. This found in the wilderness must have reminded the Pilgrim of home.

For a week past I have heard the cool, watery note of the goldfinch, from time to time, as it twittered past.

June 15, 1854. I think the birds sing somewhat feebler now-a-days. The note of the bobolink begins to sound somewhat rare.

June 15, 1858. That coarse grass in the Island Meadow which grows in full circles, as in the Great Meadows, is wool grass. Some is now fairly in bloom. Many plants have a similar habit of growth. The *Osmunda regia*

lis growing in very handsome hollow circles, or sometimes only crescents, or arcs of circles, is now generally of a peculiarly tender green, but some has begun to go to seed and look brown; hollow circles one or two feet to a rod in diameter. These two are more obvious when, as now, all the rest of the meadow is covered with water.

June 16, 1852. 4.30 A. M. A low fog on the meadows. The scattered cloud wisps in the sky, like a squadron thrown into disorder, at the approach of the sun. The sun now gilds an eastern cloud, giving it a broad, bright, coppery-golden edge, fiery bright, notwithstanding which the protuberances of the cloud cast dark shadows ray-like up into the day. The earth looks like a debauchee after the sultry night. Birds sing at this hour as in the spring. The white lily is budded. Paddle down from the ash tree to the swimming-place. The farther shore is crowded with *polygonum* and *pontederia* leaves. There seems to have intervened no night. The heat of the day is unabated. You perspire before sunrise. The bull-frogs boom still. No toads now. The river appears covered with an almost imperceptible blue film. The sun is not yet over the bank. What wealth in a stagnant river! There is music in every sound in the morning atmosphere. As I look up over the

bay I see the reflection of the meadow, woods, and Hosmer Hill, at a distance, the tops of the trees cut off by a slight ripple. Even the fine grasses on the near bank are distinctly reflected. Owing to the reflections of the distant woods and hills you seem to be paddling into a vast hollow country, doubly novel and interesting. Thus the *voyageur* is lured onward to fresh pastures. The melting heat begins again as soon as the sun gets up. The bull-frog lies on the very surface of the pads, showing his great yellow throat (color of the yellow breeches of the old school), and protuberant eyes, his whole back out, revealing a vast expanse of belly, his eyes like ranunculus, or yellow lily buds, winking from time to time, and showing his large, dark-bordered tympanum, imperturbable looking. His yellow throat swells up like a small moon at a distance over the pads when he croaks.

The floating pond-weed, *Potamogeton natans*, with the oblong oval leaf floating on the surface, now in bloom. The yellow water ranunculus still yellows the river in the middle where shallow, in beds many rods long. It is one of the capillary leaved plants.

By and by the *Bidens* (marigold) will stand in the river as now the ranunculus. The spring yellows are faint, cool, innocent as the saffron morning compared with the blaze of noon. The

autumnal, methinks, are the fruit of the dog days, heats of manhood or age, not youth. The former are pure, transparent, crystalline, viz., the willow catkins and the early cinquefoils. This ranunculus, too, standing two or three inches above the water, is of a light yellow, especially at a distance. This I think is the rule with respect to spring flowers, though there are exceptions.

9 P. M. Down railroad. Heat lightning in the distance; a sultry night. The sound of a flute from some villager. How rare among men so fit a thing as the sound of a flute at evening! — Have not the fire-flies in the meadow relation to the stars above, *étincelant*? When the darkness comes we see stars beneath also. — The sonorous note of the bull-frog is heard a mile off in the river, the loudest sound this evening. Ever and anon the sound of his trombone comes over the meadows and fields.

Do not the stars, too, show their light for love, like the fire-flies? There are northern lights, shooting high up, withal.

June 16, 1853. 4 A. M. To Nashawtuck, by boat. Before 4 A. M. or sunrise, the sound of chip-birds, robins, blue-birds, etc., is incessant. It is a crowing on the roost, I fancy, as the cock crows before he goes abroad. They do not sing deliberately as at evening, but greet the morning

with an incessant twitter. Even the crickets seem to join the concert. Yet I think it is not the same every morning, though it may be fair. An hour or two later there is comparative silence. The awaking of the birds, a tumultuous twittering.

At sunrise a slight mist curls along the surface of the water. When the sun falls on this, it looks like a red dust.

As seen from the top of the hill, the sun just above the horizon, red and shorn of beams, is somewhat pear-shaped, owing to some irregularity in the refraction of the lower strata of the air, produced, as it were, by the dragging of the lower part, and then it becomes a broad ellipse, the lower half a dun red, owing to the greater grossness of the air there.

The distant river is like molten silver at this hour. It reflects merely the light, not the blue.

What shall I name that small cloud that attends the sun's rising, that hangs over the portals of the day, like an embroidered banner, and heralds his coming, though sometimes it proves a portcullis which falls and cuts off the new day in its birth.

Found four tortoises' nests on the high bank just robbed, and the eggs devoured, one not emptied of its yolk. Others had been robbed some days. Apparently about three eggs to

each. Presently I saw a skunk making off with an undulating motion, a white streak above and a parallel and broader black one below; undoubtedly the robber.

A sweet brier, apparently yesterday.

Coming along I heard a singular sound as of a bird in distress amid the bushes, and turned to relieve it. Next thought of a squirrel in an apple-tree barking at me. Then found that it came from a hole in the ground under my feet, a loud sound between a grunting and a wheezing, yet not unlike the sound a red squirrel sometimes makes, though louder. Looking down the hole, I saw the tail and hind quarters of a wood-chuck which seemed to be contending with another farther in. Reaching down carefully I took hold of the tail, and though I had to pull very hard indeed, I drew him out between the rocks, a bouncing, great fat fellow, and tossed him a little way down the hill. As soon as he recovered from his bewilderment he made for the hole again, but I barring the way, he ran elsewhere.

P. M. To Baker Farm by boat.

Was that a smaller bittern or a meadow-hen that we started from out the button-bushes? What places for the mud-hen beneath the stems of the button-bushes along the shore, all shaggy with rootlets, as if all the weeds the river pro-

tected, all the ranunculas at least, had drifted and lodged against them. Their stems are so nearly horizontal near the mud and water that you can clamber along on them over the water many rods. It is one of the wildest features in our scenery. There is scarcely any firm footing on the ground except where a musk-rat has made a heap of clam shells. Picture the river at a low stage of the water, the pads, shriveled in the sun, hanging from the dark brown stems of the button-bushes which are all shaggy with masses of dark rootlets, an impenetrable thicket, and a stake-driver or *Ardea minor* sluggishly winging his way up the stream.

The breams' nests, like large, deep milk pans, are left high and dry on the shore. They are not only deepened within, but have raised edges. In some places they are as close together as they can be, with each a great bream in it whose waving fins and tail are tipped with a sort of phosphorescent luminousness.

We sailed all the way back from Baker Farm, though the wind blew very nearly at right angles with the river much of the way. By sitting on one side of the boat we made its edge serve for a keel, so that it would mind the helm. The dog swam for long distances behind us. Each time we passed under the lee of a wood, we were becalmed, and then met with contrary and flawy

winds till we got fairly beyond its influence. But you can always sail either up or down the river, for the wind inclines to blow along the channel, especially where the banks are high. We taste at each cool spring with which we are acquainted in the bank, making haste to reach it before the dog, who otherwise is sure to be found cooling himself in it. We sometimes use him to sit in the stern and trim the boat while we both row, for he is heavy, and otherwise we sink the bow too much in the water. But he has a habit of standing too near the rower, and at each stroke receiving a fillip from the rower's fists; so at last he tumbles himself overboard and takes a riparian excursion. We are amused to see how judiciously he selects his points for crossing the river from time to time, in order to avoid long circuits made necessary on land by bays and meadows, and keep as near us as possible.

Found at Bittern Cliff the *Potentilla arguta*, crowded cinquefoil, our only white one, stem and leaves somewhat like the *Norvegica*, but more woolly; a yellowish white.

June 16, 1854. 5 A. M. Up railroad. As the sun went down last night round and red in a damp, misty atmosphere, so now it rises in the same manner, though there is no dense fog.

Observed yesterday the erigeron with a purple tinge. I cannot tell whether this which seems in

other respects the same with the white is the *strigosum* or the *annuum*.

Nymphæa odorata. Again I scent the white lily, and a season I had waited for has arrived. How indispensable all these experiences to make up the summer. It is the emblem of purity, and its scent suggests it. Growing in stagnant and muddy water, it bursts up so pure and fair to the eye and so sweet to the scent, as if to show us what purity and sweetness reside in and can be extracted from the slime and muck of earth. It is the resurrection of virtue. It is these sights and sounds and fragrances that convince us of our immortality. No man believes against all evidence. Our external senses consent with our internal. This fragrance assures me that though all other men fall, one shall stand fast, though a pestilence sweep over the earth, it shall at least spare one man. The Genius of Nature is unimpaired. Her flowers are as fair and as fragrant as ever.

As for birds, I think that their choir begins to be decidedly less full and loud. . . . The bobolink, full strains, but farther between.

The *Rosa nitida* grows along the edge of the ditches, the half open flowers showing the deepest rosy tints, so glowing that they make an evening or twilight of the surrounding afternoon, seeming to stand in the shade or twilight.

Already the bright petals of yesterday's flowers are thickly strewn along on the black sand at the bottom of the ditch.

The *Rosa nitida*, the earlier (?), with its narrow, shiny leaves and prickly stem, and its moderate-sized rose-pink petals.

The *Rosa lucida*, with its broader and duller leaves, but larger and perhaps deeper-colored and more purple petals, perhaps yet higher scented, and its great yellow centre of stamens.

The smaller, lighter, but perhaps more delicately tinted *Rosa rubiginosa*. One and all drop their petals the second day. I bring home the buds of the three ready to expand at night, and the next day they perfume my chamber. Add to these the white lily just begun, also the swamp pink, and the great orchis, and mountain laurel, now in prime, and perhaps we must say that the fairest flowers are now to be found, or say a few days later. The arethusa is disappearing.

It is eight days since I plucked the great orchis. One is perfectly fresh still in my pitcher. It may be plucked when the spike is only half opened, and will open completely and keep perfectly fresh in a pitcher more than a week. Do I not live in a garden, in Paradise? I can go out each morning before breakfast,—I do,—and gather these flowers with which to perfume my chamber where I read and write all day.

The note of the cherry-bird is fine and ringing, but peculiar and very noticeable. With its crest it is a resolute and combative looking bird.

Meadow-sweet to-morrow.

June 16, 1855. See young and weak striped squirrels now-a-days with slender tails, asleep on horizontal boughs above their holes, or moving feebly about. Might catch them.

June 16, 1858. How agreeable and wholesome the fragrance of the low blackberry blossoms, reminding one of all the rosaceous, fruit-bearing plants, so near and dear to our humanity. It is one of the most deliciously fragrant flowers, reminding of wholesome fruits.

June 16, 1860. . . . It appears to me that the following phenomena occur simultaneously, say June 12, viz. : Heat about 85° at 2 P. M. True summer.

Hylodes cease to peep.

Purring frogs (*Rana palustris*) cease.

Lightning bugs first seen.

Bull-frogs trump generally.

Afternoon thunder-showers almost regular.

Turtles fairly and generally begin to lay.

June 17, 1840. Our lives will not attain to be spherical by lying on one or the other side forever, but only so far as we resign ourselves to the law of gravity in us, will our axis become

coincident with the celestial axis, and by revolving incessantly through all circles, shall we acquire a perfect sphericity. . . .

Even the motto "business before friends" admits of a high interpretation. No interval of time can avail to defer friendship. The concerns of time must be attended to in time. I need not make haste to explore the whole secret of a star. If it were vanished quite out of the firmament so that no telescope could longer discover it, I should not despair of knowing it entirely one day.

We meet our friend with a certain awe, as if he had just lighted on the earth, and yet as if we had some title to be acquainted with him by our old familiarity with sun and moon.

June 17, 1852. 4 A. M. To Cliffs. No fog this morning. At early dawn, the windows being open, I hear a steady, breathing, cricket-like sound from the chip-bird (?) ushering in the day. Perhaps these mornings are the most memorable in the year, after a sultry night and before a sultry day, when especially the morning is the most glorious season of the day, when its coolness is most refreshing and you enjoy the glory of the summer, gilded or silvered with dews, without the torrid summer's sun or the obscuring haze. The sound of the crickets at dawn after these first sultry nights seems like the dreaming

of the earth still continued into the day-light. I love that early twilight hour when the crickets still creak right on with such dewy faith and promise, as if it were still night, expressing the innocence of morning, when the creak of the cricket is fresh and bedewed. While it has that ambrosial sound, no crime can be committed. It buries Greece and Rome past resurrection. The earth song of the cricket! Before Christianity was, it is. Health! health! health! is the burden of its song. It is, of course, that man refreshed with sleep is thus innocent and healthy and hopeful. When we hear that sound of the crickets in the sod, the world is not so much with us.

I hear the universal cock-crowing with surprise and pleasure, as if I never heard it before. What a tough fellow! How native to the earth! Neither wet nor dry, cold nor warm kills him.

The prudent farmer improves the early morning to do some of his work before the heat becomes too oppressive, while he can use his oxen. As yet no whetting of the scythe. . . . Ah, the refreshing coolness of the morning, full of all kinds of fragrance! — What is that little olivaceous, yellowish bird, whitish beneath, that followed me cheeping under the bushes? The birds sing well this morning, well as ever. The brown thrasher drowns the rest. The lark, and in the

woods, the red-eye, veery, chewink, oven-bird, wood-thrush.

The cistus is well open now, with its broad cup-like flower, one of the most delicate yellow flowers, with large spring-yellow petals, and its stamens laid one way. It is hard to get home fresh; caducous and inclined to droop. The yellow Bethlehem-star is of a deeper yellow than the cistus, a very neat flower, grass-like.

P. M. On the river, by Hubbard's Meadow. Looking at a clump of trees and bushes on the meadow, which is commonly flooded in the spring, I saw a middling-sized rock concealed by the leaves, lying in the midst, and perceived that this had obtained a place, had made good the locality for the maples and shrubs which had found a foothold about it. Here the weeds and tender plants were detained and protected. The bowlder dropped once on a meadow makes at length a clump of trees there, and is concealed by the beneficiaries it had protected.

June 17, 1853. The pogonias, adder's tongue arethusas, I see now-a-days, are getting to be numerous; they are far too pale to compete with the *Arethusa bulbosa*, and then their snake-like odor is much against them.

There have been three ultra reformers, lecturers on slavery, temperance, the church, etc., in and about our house and Mrs. B——'s, the last

three or four days. Though one of them was a stranger to the others, you would have thought them old and familiar cronies. They happened here together by accident. They addressed each other constantly by their Christian names, and rubbed you continually with the greasy cheek of their kindness. I was awfully pestered with the benignity of one of them, feared I should get greased all over with it past restoration, tried to keep some starch in my clothes. He wrote a book called "A Kiss for a Blow," and he behaved as if I had given him a blow, was bent on giving me the kiss when there was neither quarrel nor agreement between us. I wanted that he should straighten his back, smooth out those ogling wrinkles of benignity about his eyes, and with a healthy reserve pronounce something in a downright manner. . . . He addressed me as "Henry" within one minute from the time I first laid eyes on him; and when I spoke, he said with drawling, sultry sympathy, "Henry, I know all you would say, I understand you perfectly, you need not explain anything to me," and to another, "I am going to dive into Henry's inmost depths." I said, "I trust you will not strike your head against the bottom." He could tell in a dark room, with his eyes blinded, and in perfect stillness, if there was one there whom he loved. One of the most attractive things

about the flowers is their beautiful reserve. The truly beautiful and noble puts its lover, as it were, at an infinite distance, while it attracts him more strongly than ever. . . . What a relief to have heard the ring of one healthy, reserved tone.

The dense fields of blue-eyed grass now blue the meadows, as if, in this fair season of the year, the clouds that envelope the earth were dispersing, and blue patches begin to appear answering to the blue sky. The eyes pass from these blue patches into the surrounding green as from the patches of clear sky into the clouds.

One of the night-hawk's eggs is hatched. The young is unlike any that I have seen, exactly like a pinch of rabbit's fur, or down of that color, dropped on the ground, not two inches long, with a dimpling, somewhat regular arrangement of minute feathers in the middle, destined to become the wings and tail. Yet it even half opened its eye, and peeped, if I mistake not. Was ever bird more completely protected, both by the color of its eggs, and of its own body that sits on them, and of the young bird just hatched? Accordingly the eggs and young are rarely discovered. There was one egg still, and by the side of it this little pinch of down flattened out and not observed at first.

A foot down the hill had rolled half the egg

it came out of. There was no callowness as in the young of most birds. It seemed a singular place for a bird to begin its life, this little pinch of down, and lie still on the exact spot where the egg lay, a flat exposed shelf on the side of a bare hill, with nothing but the whole heavens, the broad universe above, to brood it when its mother was away.

The huckleberry apple is sometimes a red shoot, with tender and thick red leaves and branchlets, in all three inches long. It is, as it were, a monstrous precocity, and what should have waited to become fruit is a merely bloated or puffed up flower. A child with a great drop-sical head, and prematurely bright, is a huckleberry apple. The really sweet and palatable huckleberry is not matured before July, and runs the risk of drying up in drouth, and never attaining its proper size.

There are some fine large clusters of lambkill close to the shore of Walden, under the Peak, fronting the south. They are early, too, and large, apparently, both on account of the warmth and the vicinity of the water. These flowers are in perfect cylinders, sometimes six inches long by two wide, and three such raying out or upward from one centre, that is, three branches clustered together. Examined close by, I think this handsomer than the mountain laurel. The

color is richer, but it does not show so well at a little distance, and the corymbs are somewhat concealed by the green shoot and leaves rising above them, and also by the dry remains of last year's flowers.

The mountain laurel by Walden in its prime. It is a splendid flower, and more red than that in Mason's pasture. Its dry, dead-looking, brittle stems lean, as it were, over other bushes or each other, bearing at the ends great dense corymbs five inches in diameter, of rose or pink (?) tinged flowers, without an interstice between them, overlapping each other, each of more than an inch in diameter. A single flower would be esteemed very beautiful. It is a highlander wandered down into the plain.

June 17, 1854. 5 A. M. To Hill. A cold fog. These mornings those who walk in grass are thoroughly wet above mid-leg. All the earth is dripping wet. I am surprised to feel how warm the water is by contrast with the cold, foggy air. . . . The dewy cobwebs are very thick this morning, little napkins of the fairies spread on the grass. . . .

From the Hill I am reminded of more youthful mornings, seeing the dark forms of the trees eastward in the low grounds, partly within and against the shining white fog, the sun just risen over it. The mist fast rolls away eastward from

them, their tops at last streaking it and dividing it into vales, all beyond a submerged and unknown country, as if they grew on the sea-shore. Why does the fog go off always towards the sun, seen in the east when it has disappeared in the west? The waves of the foggy ocean divide and flow back for us Israelites of a day to march through.

Saw the sun reflected up from the Assabet to the hill-top through the dispersing fog, giving to the water a peculiarly rippled, pale golden hue, "gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy."

P. M. To Walden and Cliffs. . . . It is dry, hazy June weather. We are more of the earth, farther from heaven these days. We live in a grosser element, getting deeper into the mists of earth. Even the birds sing with less vigor and vivacity. The season of hope and promise is past. Already the season of small fruits has arrived. The Indian marked the midsummer as the season when berries were ripe. We are a little saddened because we begin to see the interval between our hopes and their fulfillment. The prospect of the heavens is taken away, and we are presented only with a few small berries.

Before sundown I reached Fair Haven Hill and gathered strawberries. I find beds of large and lusty strawberry plants in sproutlands, but

they appear to run to leaves and bear very little fruit, having spent themselves in leaves by the time the dry weather arrives. It is those still earlier and more stunted plants which grow on dry uplands that bear the early fruit, formed before the droughts. But the meadows produce both leaves and fruit.

I begin to see the flowering fern at a distance in the river meadows.

The sun goes down red again, like a high-colored flower of summer; as the white and yellow flowers of spring are giving place to the rose, and will soon to the red lily, etc., so the yellow sun of spring has become a red sun of June drought, round and red like a midsummer flower, production of torrid heats.

June 18, 1840. I am startled when I consider how little I am *actually* concerned about the things I write in my journal.

A fair land, indeed, do books spread open to us, from the Genesis down, — but, alas! men do not take them up kindly into their own being, and breathe into them a fresh beauty, knowing that the grimmest of them belongs to such warm sunshine and still moonlight as the present.

June 18, 1852. The hornet's nest is built with many thin layers of his paper, with an interval of about one eighth of an inch between them, so that his wall is one or two inches thick

This probably for warmth, dryness, and lightness. So the carpenter has learned to sometimes build double walls.

7 P. M. To Cliffs. . . . Pyrolas are beginning to blossom. The four-leaved loosestrife. The longest days in the year have now come. The sun goes down now (this moment) behind Watatic, from the Cliffs. St. John's-wort is beginning to blossom.

I hear a man playing a clarionet far off. Apollo tending the flocks of Admetus. How cultivated, how sweet and glorious is music! Men have brought this art to great perfection, the art of modulating sound, by long practice, since the world began. What superiority over the rude harmony of savages! There is something glorious and flower-like in it. What a contrast this evening melody with the occupations of the day. It is perhaps the most admirable accomplishment of man.

June 18, 1853. 4 A. M. By boat to Nashawtuck, to Azalea or Pinxter Spring. . . . Almost all birds appear to join the early morning chorus before sunrise on the roost, the matin hymn. I hear now the robin, the chip-bird, the blackbird, the martin, etc., but I see none flying, or at least only one wing in the air not yet illumined by the sun. As I was going up the hill, I was surprised to see rising above the June

grass, near a walnut, a whitish object, like a stone with a white top, or a skunk erect, for it was black below. It was an enormous toadstool, or fungus, a sharply conical parasol in the form of a sugar loaf, slightly turned up at the edges, which were rent half an inch for every inch or two. The whole length was sixteen inches. The pileus, or cap, was six inches long by seven in width at the rim, though it appeared longer than wide. . . . The stem was about one inch in diameter and naked. The top of the cap was quite white within and without, not smooth, but with a stringy kind of scales turned upward at the edge. These declined downward into a coarse hoariness, as if the compact white fibres had been burst by the spreading gills. It looked much like an old felt hat pushed up into a cone, its rim all ragged, with some meal shaken upon it. It was almost big enough for a child's head. It was so delicate and fragile that its whole cap trembled at the least touch, and as I could not lay it down without injuring it, I was obliged to carry it home all the way in my hand, erect, while I paddled my boat with one hand. It was a wonder how its soft cone ever broke through the earth. Such growths ally our age to those earlier periods which geology reveals. I wondered if it had not some relation to the skunk, though not in odor, yet in its color and the gen-

eral impression it made. It suggests a vegetative force which may almost make man tremble for his dominion. It carries me back to the era of the formation of the coal measures, the age of the Saurus and the Pliosaurus, and when bull-frogs were as big as bulls. Its stem had something massy about it, like an oak, large in proportion to the weight it had to support (though not perhaps to the size of the cap), like the vast hollow columns under some piazzas, whose caps have hardly weight enough to hold their tops together. It made you think of pictures of parasols of Chinese mandarins, or it might have been used by the great fossil bull-frog in his walks. What part does it play in the economy of the world? . . . I have just been out (7.30 A. M.) to show my fungus. . . . It is so fragile I was obliged to walk at a funereal pace for fear of jarring it. It is so delicately balanced that it falls to one side on the least inclination. It is rapidly curling up on the edge, and the rents increasing, until it is completely fringed, and is an inch wider there. It is melting in the sun and light, black drops and streams falling on my hand, and fragments of the black-fringed rim falling on the sidewalk. Evidently such a plant can only be seen in perfection in the early morning. It is a creature of the night, like the great moth. . . . It is

to be remarked that this grew not in low and damp soil, but high up on the open side of a dry hill . . . in the midst of, and rising above, the thin June grass. The last night was warm, the earth was very dry, and there was a slight sprinkling of rain.

I think the blossom of the sweetbrier, *eglan-tine* (now in prime), is more delicate and interesting than that of the common wild roses, though smaller and paler, and without their spicy fragrance. But its fragrance is in its leaves all summer, and the form of the bush is handsomer, curving over from a considerable height in wreaths sprinkled with numerous flowers. They open out flat soon after sunrise. Flowers whitish in middle, then pinkish rose, inclining to purple toward the edges.

How far from our minds now the early blossoms of the spring, the willow catkins, for example.

I put the parasol fungus in the cellar to preserve it, but it went on rapidly melting and wasting away from the edges upward, spreading as it dissolved, till it was shaped like a dish-cover. By night, though left in the cellar all the day, there was not more than two of the six inches of the height of the cap left, and the barrel-head beneath it and its own stem looked as if a large bottle of ink had been broken

there. It defiled all it touched. The next morning the hollow stem was left perfectly bare, and only the hoary apex of the cone, spreading about two inches in diameter, lay on the ground beneath. Probably one night produced it, and in one day, with all our pains, it wasted away. Is it not a giant mildew or mould? In the warm, muggy night the surface of the earth is mildewed. The mould which is the flower of humid darkness and ignorance. The pyramids and other monuments of Egypt are a vast mildew or toad-stool which have met with no light of day sufficient to waste them away. Slavery is such a mould and superstition which are most rank in the warm and humid portions of the globe. Luxor sprang up one night out of the slime of the Nile. The humblest, puniest weed that can endure the sun is thus superior to the largest fungus, as is the peasant's cabin to those foul temples. . . . All things flower, both vices and virtues, but one is essentially foul, another fair. In hell, toad-stools should be represented as overshadowing men. The priest is the fungus of the graveyard, of the tomb. In the animal world there are toads and lizards.

P. M. To Island by boat.

The first white lily to-day perhaps. It is the only *bud* I have seen. The river has gone down and left it nearly dry. On the Island, where a

month ago plants were so fresh and early, it is now parched and crisp under my feet. I feel the heat reflected from the ground and perceive the dry scent of grass and leaves. So universally on dry and rocky hills, where the spring was earliest, the autumn has already commenced. . . .

At the Flower Exhibition saw the rhododendron plucked yesterday in Fitzwilliam, N. H. It was the earliest to be found there, and only one bud was fully open. They say it is in perfection there the 4th of July, nearer Monadnock than the town.

This unexpected display of flowers culled from the gardens of the village suggests how many virtues also are cultivated by the villagers more than meet the eye.

Saw to-night ——'s horse, which works on the sawing-machine at the depot, now let out to graze along the road. At each step he lifts his hind legs convulsively from the ground, as if the whole earth were a treadmill continually slipping away from under him while he climbed its convex surface. It was painful to witness, but it was symbolical of the moral condition of his master and of all artisans in contradistinction from artists, all who are engaged in any routine, for to them also the whole earth is a treadmill, and the routine results instantly in a similar

painful deformity. The horse may bear the mark of his servitude in the muscles of his legs, the man on his brow.

8.30 P. M. To Cliffs. Moon not quite full. There is no wind. The greenish fires of lightning bugs are already seen in the meadow. I almost lay my hand on one amid the leaves as I get over the fence at the brook. I hear the whippoorwills on different sides. White flowers alone show much at night, as white clover and white weed. The day has gone by with its wind like the wind of a cannon ball, and now far in the west it blows. By that dun-colored sky you may track it. There is no motion nor sound in the woods (Hubbard's Grove) along which I am walking. The trees stand like great screens against the sky. The distant village sounds are the barking of dogs, that animal with which man has allied himself, and the rattling of wagons, for the farmers have gone into town a shopping this Saturday night. The dog is the tamed wolf, as the villager is the tamed savage. Near at hand the crickets are heard in the grass chirping from everlasting to everlasting. The humming of a dor-bug drowns all the noise of the village, so roomy is the universe. The moon comes out of the mackerel cloud, and the traveler rejoices. How can a man write the same thoughts by the light of the moon, resting his book on a rail by

the side of a remote potato field, that he does by the light of the sun at his study table. The light is but a luminousness. My pencil seems to move through a creamy, mystic medium. The moonlight is rich and somewhat opaque, like cream, but the daylight is thin and blue, like skimmed milk. I am less conscious than in the presence of the sun, my instincts have more influence.

The farmer has improved the dry weather to burn his meadow. I love the smell of that burning, as a man may his pipe. It reminds me of a new country offering sites for the hearths of men. It is cheering as the scent of the peat fire of the first settler.

At Potter's sand bank, the sand, though cold on the surface, begins to be warm two inches beneath, and the warmth reaches at least six inches deeper. The tortoise buries her eggs just deep enough to secure this greatest constant warmth.

I passed into and along the bottom of a lake of cold and dewy evening air. Anon, as I rise higher, here comes a puff of warm air, trivially warm, a straggler from the sun's retinue, now buffeted about by the vanguard night breezes.

Before me, southward toward the moon, on higher land than I, but springy, I saw a low film of fog, like a veil, reflecting the moonlight, though none on lower ground which was not

springy, and up the river beyond, a battalion of fog rising white in the moonlight in ghost-like wisps, or like a flock of scared covenanters in a recess amid the hills. . . .

It is worth while to walk thus in the night after a warm or sultry day, to enjoy the fresh, up-country, brake-like, spring-like scent in low grounds. At night the surface of the earth is a cellar, a refrigerator, no doubt wholesomer than those made with ice by day. Got home at 11.

June 18, 1854. P. M. To Climbing Fern. The meadows, like this Nut Meadow, are now full of the latter grasses just beginning to flower, and the graceful columns of the rue (*thalictrum*) not yet generally in flower, and the large tree or shrub-like Archangelica with its great umbels now fairly in bloom along the edge of the brook. . . .

I discover that Dugan found the eggs of my snapping turtle of June 7th, apparently the same day. It is perhaps five or six rods from the brook, in the sand near its edge. The surface had been disturbed over a foot and a half in diameter, and was slightly concave. The nest commenced five inches beneath, and at its neck was two and a half inches across, and from this nearly four inches deep, and swelled out below to four inches in width, shaped like a short, rounded bottle with a broad mouth, and the sur-

rounding sand was quite firm. I took out forty-two eggs closely packed, and Dugan says he had previously broken one. They are dirty, white and spherical, a little more than one and a sixteenth of an inch in diameter, soft-shelled so that my finger left a permanent dimple in them. It was now ten days since they had been laid, and a little more than half of each was darker colored (probably the lower half) and the other, white and dry-looking. I opened one, but could detect no organization with the unarmed eye. The halves of the shell, as soon as emptied, curled up as we see them where the skunks have sucked them. They must all have been laid at one time. If it were not for the skunks and probably other animals, we should be overrun with them. Who can tell how many tortoise eggs are buried in this small desert.

Often certain words or syllables which have suggested themselves remind one better of a bird's strain than the most elaborate and closest imitation.

June 18, 1855. To Hemlocks. . . . At 3 P. M., as I walked up the bank by the Hemlocks, I saw a painted tortoise just beginning its hole. Then another a dozen rods from the river on the bare, barren field near some pitch pines, where the earth was covered with cladonias, cinquefoil, sorrel, etc. Its hole was about two thirds done.

I stooped down over it, and to my surprise, after a slight pause, it proceeded in its work directly under and within eighteen inches of my face. I retained a constrained position for three quarters of an hour or more, for fear of alarming it. It rested on its fore-legs, the front part of its shell about an inch higher than the rear, and this position was not changed, essentially, to the last. The hole was oval, broadest behind, about an inch wide and one and three quarters long, and the dirt already removed was quite wet or moistened. It made the hole and removed the dirt with its hind legs only, not using its tail or shell, which last, of course, could not enter the hole, though there was some dirt on it. It first scratched two or three times with one hind foot, then took up a pinch of the loose sand and deposited it directly behind that leg, pushing it backward to its full length, and then deliberately opening it and letting the dirt fall. Then the same with the other hind foot. This it did rapidly, using each leg alternately with perfect regularity, standing on the other one the while, and thus tilting up its shell each time, now to this side, then to that. There was half a minute or a minute between each change. The hole was made as deep as the feet could reach, or about two inches. It was very neat about its work, not scattering the dirt about more than was neces-

sary. The completing of the hole occupied perhaps five minutes. It then, without any pause, drew its head completely into its shell, raised the rear a little, and protruded and dropped a wet, flesh-colored egg into the hole, one end foremost. Then it put out its head again a little slowly, and placed the egg one side with one hind foot. After a delay of about two minutes it again drew in its head and dropped another, and so on to the fifth, drawing in its head each time, and pausing somewhat longer between the last. The eggs were placed in the hole without any particular care, only well down flat, and each out of the way of the next. I could plainly see them from above.

After ten minutes or more, without pause or turning, it began to scrape the moist earth into the hole with its hind legs, and, when it had half filled it, carefully pressed the earth down with the edges of its hind feet, dancing on these alternately for some time, as on its knees, tilting from side to side, pressing by the whole weight of the rear of its shell. When it had drawn in thus all the earth that had been moistened, it stretched its hind legs further back and to each side, and drew in the dry and lichen-clad crust, and then danced upon and pressed that down, still not moving the rear of its shell more than one inch to right or left all the while, or chang-

ing the position of the forward part at all. The thoroughness with which the covering was done was remarkable. It persevered in drawing in and dancing on the dry surface which had never been disturbed, long after you thought it had done its duty, but it never moved its fore-feet, nor once looked round, nor saw the eggs it had laid. There were frequent pauses throughout the whole, when it rested, or ran out its head and looked about circumspectly at any noise or motion. These pauses were especially long during the covering of its eggs, which occupied more than half an hour. Perhaps it was hard work.

When it had done, it immediately started for the river at a pretty rapid rate (the suddenness with which it made these transitions was amusing), pausing from time to time, and I judged it would reach it in fifteen minutes. It was not easy to detect that the ground had been disturbed there. An Indian could not have made his cache more skillfully. In a few minutes all traces of it would be lost to the eye.

The object of moistening the earth was perhaps to enable it to take it up in its hands (?), and also to prevent its falling back into the hole. Perhaps it also helped to make the ground more compact and harder when it was pressed down. [September 10. I can find no trace of the tor-

toise eggs of June 18th, though there is no trace of their having been disturbed by skunks. They must have been hatched earlier.]

June 18, 1859. P. M. Sail up river. Rain again, and we take shelter under a bridge, and again under our boat, and again under a pine-tree. It is worth while to sit or lie through a shower thus under a bridge, or under a boat on the bank, because the rain is a much more interesting and remarkable phenomenon under these circumstances. The surface of the stream betrays every drop from the first to the last, and all the variations of the storm, so much more expressive is the water than the comparatively brutish face of earth. We no doubt often walk between drops of rain falling thinly, without knowing it, though if on the water we should have been advertised of it. At last the whole surface is nicked with the abounding drops, as if it rose in little cones to accompany or meet the drops, till it looks like the back of some spiny fruit or animal, and yet the differently colored currents, light and dark, are seen through it all. Then, when it clears up, how gradually the surface of the water becomes more placid and bright, the dimples becoming fewer and finer till the prolonged reflections of trees are seen in it, and the water is lit up with a joy in sympathy with our own, while the earth is comparatively dead.

I saw swarms of little gnats, light-winged, dancing over the water in the midst of the rain, though you would say any drop might end one's days.

June 19, 1852. 8.30 A. M. To Flag Hill, on which Stow, Acton, and Boxboro corner, with C——. A fine, clear June morning, comfortable and breezy, no dust, a journey day. . . . The traveler now has the creak of the cricket to encourage him on all country routes, out of the fresh sod, still fresh as in the dawn, not interrupting his thoughts. Very cheering and refreshing to hear, so late in the day, this morning sound. The white-weed colors some meadows as completely as the frosting does a cake. The waving June grass shows watered colors like grain. No mower's scythe is heard. The farmers are hoeing their corn and potatoes. . . . The clover is now in its glory, whole fields are *rosed* with it, mixed with sorrel, and looking deeper than it is. It makes fields look luxuriant which are really thinly clad. The air is full of its fragrance. I cannot find the *Linnæa* at Loring's, perhaps because the woods are cut down. Perhaps I am too late. The robins sing more than usual, may be because of the coolness. Buttercups and geraniums cover the meadows, the latter appearing to float on the grass, of various tints. It has lasted long, this rather tender flower. . . . The

light of June is not golden but silvery, not torrid, but somewhat temperate. I see it reflected from the bent grass and the under-sides of leaves. Also I perceive faint, silvery, gleaming ripples where there is a rapid in the river (from railroad bridge at D——'s) without sun on it.

The mullein out with a disagreeable scent, and the dogsbane with a quite handsome, bell-shaped flower, beautifully striped with red (rose red?) within.

Facts collected by a poet are set down at last as winged seeds of truth, *samaræ*, tinged with his expectation. O may my words be verdurous and sempiternal as the hills. Facts fall from the poetic observer as ripe seeds.

The river has a June look; dark, smooth, reflecting surfaces in shade. The sight of the water is refreshing, suggesting coolness. The shadows in and under elms and other trees have not been so rich hitherto. It is grateful to look forward half a mile into some dark, umbrageous elm or ash.

The grape in bloom, an agreeable perfume to many; not so to me. This is not the meadow fragrance then which I have perceived.

May be the huckleberry bird best expresses the season, or the red-eye. What subtile differences between one season and another.

The veiny-leaved hawk-weed out. A large swelling pasture hill with hickories left for shade, and cattle now under them. The bark is rubbed smooth and red with their hides. Pleasant to go over the hills, for there most air is stirring, but you must look out for bulls in the pastures. Saw one here reclining in the shade amid the cows. His short sanguinary horns betrayed him, and we gave him a wide berth, for they are not to be reasoned with. On our right is Acton, on our left is Stow, and forward, Boxboro. Thus King Richard sailed the *Ægean*, and passed kingdoms on his right and left. We are on one of the breezy hills that make the western horizon from Concord, from which we see our familiar Concord hills much changed and reduced in height and breadth. We are in a country very different from Concord, of swelling hills and long vales on the bounds of these three towns, more up-countryish. It requires considerable skill in crossing a country to avoid the houses and too cultivated parts, somewhat of the engineer's or gunner's skill so to pass a house (if you must go near it through high grass), pass the enemy's lines where houses are thick, as to make a hill or wood screen you, to shut every window with an apple-tree, for that route which most avoids the houses is not only the one in which you will be least molested, but it is by far

the most agreeable. It is rare that you cannot avoid a grain-field or piece of English mowing by skirting a corn-field or nursery near by, but if you must go through high grass, then step lightly and in each other's tracks.

We soon fell into a dry swamp filled with high bushes and trees, and beneath, tall ferns, one with a large pinnate leaf five or six feet high and one foot broad, making a dense undergrowth in tufts at bottom, spreading every way. There were two species of this size, one more compound than the other. These we opened with our hands, making a path through, completely in the cool shade. I steered by the sun, though it was so high now at noon that I observed which way my short shadow fell before I entered the swamp (for in it we could see nothing of the country around), and then by keeping it on a particular side of me, I steered surely, standing still sometimes till the sun came out of a cloud, to be sure of our course. Came out at length on a side hill very near the South Acton line or Stow. . . .

The orchis keeps well. One put in my hat this morning and carried all day will last fresh a day or two at home. These are peculiar days when you find the purple orchis and the arethusa, too, in the meadows.

The fields a walker loves best to strike into

are bare, extended, rolling, bordered by copses, with brooks and meadows in sight, sandy beneath the thin sod where now blackberries and pinks grow, erst rye or oats, perchance these and stony pastures where is no high grass, nor grain, nor cultivated ground, nor houses near.

Flag Hill is about eight miles by the road from Concord. We went much farther both going and returning. But by a how much nobler road! Suppose you were to drive to Boxboro, what then? You pass a few teams with their dust, drive past many farmers' barn-yards, see where Squire Tuttle lives and barrels his apples, bait your horse at White's tavern, and so return with your hands smelling of greasy leather and horse hair, and the squeak of a chaise body in your ears, with no new flower nor agreeable experience. But going as we did, before you got to Boxboro line, you often went much farther, many times ascended New Hampshire hills, taking the noble road from hill to hill across swamps and valleys, not regarding political courses and boundaries, many times far west in your thoughts. It is a journey of a day and a picture of human life.

June 19, 1853. P. M. To Flint's Pond. I see large patches of blue-eyed grass in the meadow across the river from my window. The pine woods at Thrush Alley emit that hot, dry

scent, reminding me even of days when I used to go a blackberrying. . . . The wood-thrush sings as usual far in the wood. A blue jay and a tanager come dashing into the pine under which I stand. The first flies directly away screaming with suspicion or disgust, but the latter, more innocent, remains. The cuckoo is heard, too, in the depths of the wood. Heard my night warbler on a solitary white pine in the Heywood clearing by the Peak. Discovered it at last looking like a small piece of black bark curving partly over the limb. No fork to its tail. It appeared black beneath; was very shy, not bigger than a yellow bird and more slender. . . .

The strain of the bobolink now sounds a little rare. It never again fills the air as in the first week after its arrival.

June 19, 1854. P. M. Up Assabet. A thunder shower in the north. Will it strike us? How impressive this artillery of the heavens! It rises higher and higher. At length the thunder seems to roll quite across the sky and all round the horizon, even where there are no clouds, and I row homeward in haste. How by magic the skirts of the cloud are gathered about us, and it shoots forward over our head, and the rain comes at a time and place which baffles all our calculations. Just before it the swamp

white oak in Merrick's pasture was a very beautiful sight, with its rich shade of green, its top, as it were, incrustated with light. Suddenly comes the gust, and the big drops slanting from the north. The birds fly as if rudderless, and the trees bow and are wrenched. It comes against the windows like hail, and is blown over the roofs like steam or smoke. The lightning runs down the large elm at Holbrook's and shatters the house near by. Soon the sun shines in silver puddles in the streets.

Men may talk about measures till all is blue and smells of brimstone, and then go home and sit down and expect their measures to do their duty for them. The only measure is integrity and manhood.

June 19, 1859. To Heywood Meadow and Well Meadow. A flying squirrel's nest . . . in a covered hollow in a small old stump . . . covered with fallen leaves and a portion of the stump. Nest apparently of dry grass. Saw three young run out after the mother, and up a slender oak. The young half grown, very tender looking and weak-tailed. Yet one climbed quite to the top of an oak twenty-five feet high, though feebly. Their claws must be very sharp and early developed. The mother rested quite near on a small projecting stub, big as a pipe stem, curled cross-wise on it. They have a more rounded head and

snout than our other squirrels. The young in danger of being picked off by hawks.

Scare up young partridges the size of chickens; just hatched, yet they fly. The old one in the woods near makes a chuckling sound just like a red squirrel's bark, also mewing.

June 19, 1860. Let an oak be hewed and put into the frame of a house where it is sheltered, and it will last several centuries. Even as a sill it may last one hundred and fifty years. But let it be simply cut down and lie, though in an open pasture, and it will probably be thoroughly rotten in twenty-five years. There is the oak cut down at Clam Shell some twenty years ago, the butt left on the ground. It has about two thirds wasted away, and is hardly fit for fuel.

I follow a distinct fox path amid the grass and bushes for some forty rods, beyond Brittan's Hollow, leading from the great fox hole. It branches on reaching the peach orchard. No doubt by these routes they oftenest go and return. As broad as a cart wheel, and at last best seen when you do not look too hard for it.

June 20, 1840. Perfect sincerity and transparency make a great part of beauty, as in dew drops, lakes, and diamonds. A spring is a cynosure in the fields. All Muscovy glitters in the minute particles of mica at its bottom, and the

ripples cast their shadows flickeringly on the white sand as the clouds which flit across the landscape.

Something like the woodland sounds will be heard to echo through the leaves of a good book. Sometimes I hear the fresh, emphatic note of the oven-bird, and am tempted to turn many pages; sometimes the hurried chuckling sound of the squirrel, when he dives into the wall.

If we only see clearly enough how mean our lives are, they will be splendid enough. Let us remember not to strive upwards too long, but sometimes drop plumb down the other way. From the deepest pit we may see the stars. Let us have presence of mind enough to sink when we can't swim. At any rate, a carcass had better lie on the bottom than float an offense to all nostrils. It will not be falling, for we shall ride wide of the earth's gravity as a star, and always be drawn upward still (*semper cadendo nunquam cadit*), and so, by yielding to universal gravity, at length become fixed stars.

Praise begins when things are seen partially, or when we begin to feel a thing needs our assistance.

When the heavens are obscured to us, and nothing noble or heroic appears, but we are oppressed by imperfection and shortcoming on all hands, we are apt to suck our thumbs and decry

our fates, as if nothing were to be done in cloudy weather. If you cannot travel the upper road, then go by the lower; you will find that they equally lead to heaven. Sometimes I feel so cheap that I am inspired, and could write a poem about it, but straightway I cannot, for I am no longer mean. Let me know that I am ailing and I am well. We should not always beat off the impression of trivialness, but make haste to welcome and cherish it. Water the weed till it blossoms; with cultivation it will bear fruit. There are two ways to victory, to strive bravely, or to yield. How much pains the last will save, we have not yet learned.

June 20, 1852. 7 P. M. To Hubbard bathing-place. The blue-eyed grass is shut up. When does it open? Some blue flags are quite a red purple, dark wine color. Identified the *Iris prismatica*, Boston iris, with linear leaves and round stem.

The stake driver is at it in his favorite meadow. I followed the sound, and at last got within two rods, it seeming always to recede, and drawing you, like a will-o'-the-wisp, farther away into the meadows. When thus near, I heard some lower sounds at the beginning like striking on a stump or a stake, a dry, hard sound, and then followed the gurgling, pumping notes fit to come from a meadow. This was just within the

blueberry and other bushes, and when the bird flew up alarmed, I went to the place, but could see no water, which makes me doubt if water is necessary to it in making the sound. Perhaps it thrusts its bill so deep as to reach water where it is dry on the surface. It sounds more like wood chopping or pumping because you seem to hear the echo of the stroke or the reverse motion of the pump handle. After the warm weather has come, both morning and evening you hear the bittern pumping in the fens. It does not sound loud near at hand, and it is remarkable that it should be heard so far. Perhaps it is pitched on a favorable key. Is it not a call to its mate? Methinks that in the resemblance of this note to rural sounds, to sounds made by farmers, the security of the bird is designed.

Dry fields have now a reddish tinge from the seeds of the grass. Lying with my window open these warm, even sultry nights, I hear the sonorously musical trump of the bull-frogs from time to time from some distant shore of the river, as if the world were given up to them. . . . When I wake thus at midnight, and hear this sonorous trump from far in the horizon, I need not go to Dante for an idea of the infernal regions. . . . I do not know for a time in what world I am. It affects my morals, and all questions take a new aspect from this sound. It is the

snoring music of nature at night. How allied to the pad in place and color is this creature! His greenish back is the leaf, and his yellow throat, the flower, even in form, with his sesquipedality of belly. Through the summer he lies on the pads or with his head out, and in the winter buries himself at their roots (?). The bull paddock! His eyes like the buds of the *Nuphar Kalmiana*. I fancy his skin would stand water, without shrinking, forever. Gloves made of it for rainy weather, for trout fishers!

Frogs appear slow to make up their minds, but then they act precipitately. As long as they are here, they are here, and express no intention of removing. But the idea of removing fills them instantaneously, as Nature, abhorring, fills a vacuum. Now they are fixed and imperturbable like the sphinx, and now they go off with short, squatty leaps over the spatterdock on the irruption of the least idea.

June 20, 1853. . . . Meadow-sweet out probably yesterday. It is an agreeable, unpretending flower. . . . The bosky bank shows bright roses from its green recesses. . . . Found two lilies open in the very shallow inlet of the meadow. Exquisitely beautiful, and unlike anything we have, is the first white lily just expanded in some shallow lagoon where the water is leaving it, perfectly fresh and pure before the insects have

discovered it. How admirable its purity! How innocently sweet its fragrance! How significant that the rich black mud of our dead stream produces the water lily! Out of that fertile slime springs this spotless purity. It is remarkable that those flowers which are most emblematic of purity should grow in the mud. There is also the exquisite beauty of the small sagittaria which I find out, may be a day or two. Three transparent crystalline white petals with a yellow eye, and as many small purplish calyx leaves, four or five inches above the same mud. Coming home at twelve I see that the white lilies are nearly shut.

8 P. M. Up North River to Nashawtuck.

The moon full. Perhaps there is no more beautiful scene than that on the North River seen from the rock this side the hemlocks. As we look up stream we see a crescent-shaped lake completely embowered in the forest. There is nothing to be seen but the smooth black mirror of the water on which there is now the slightest discernible bluish mist a foot high, and thickset alders and willows and the green woods without an interstice, sloping steeply upward from its very surface, like the sides of a bowl. The river is here for half a mile completely shut in by the forest.

Saw a little skunk coming up the river bank in the woods at the white oak, a funny little fel-

low, about six inches long and nearly as broad. It faced me and actually compelled me to retreat before it for five minutes. Perhaps I was between it and its hole. Its broad black tail, tipped with white, was erect like a kitten's. It had what looked like a broad white band drawn tight across its forehead or top-head, from which two lines of white ran down one on each side of its back, and there was a narrow white line down its snout. It raised its back, sometimes ran a few feet forward, sometimes backward, and repeatedly turned its tail to me, prepared to discharge its fluid, like the old ones. Such was its instinct, and all the while it kept up a fine grunting like a little pig or a squirrel. It reminded me that the red squirrel, the woodchuck, and the skunk all make a similar sound.

The leafy columned elms planted by the river at foot of P——'s field are exceedingly beautiful, the moon being behind them. . . . Their trunks look like columns of a portico wreathed with evergreens on the evening of an illumination for some great festival. They are the more rich because in this creamy light you cannot distinguish the trunk from the verdure that drapes it.

June 21, 1840. A man is never inspired unless his body is also. It, too, spurns a tame and commonplace life. They are fatally mistaken who think while they strive with their minds

that they may suffer their bodies to stagnate in luxury or sloth. The body is the first proselyte the soul makes. Our life is but the soul made known by its fruits, the body. The whole duty of man may be expressed in one line. Make to yourself a perfect body.

June 21, 1852. 7 P. M. To Cliffs *via* Hubbard bathing-place. Cherry birds I have not seen, though I think I have heard them before, their fine seringo note, like a vibrating spring in the air. They are a handsome bird with their crest and chestnut breasts. There is no keeping the run of their comings and goings, but they will be ready for the cherries when they shall be ripe.

The adder's-tongue *arethusa* smells exactly like a snake. How singular that in Nature, too, beauty and offensiveness should be thus combined. In flowers as well as persons we demand a beauty pure and fragrant which perfumes the air. The flower which is showy but has no odor, or an offensive one, expresses the character of too many mortals.

Nature has looked uncommonly bare and dry to me for a day or two. With our senses applied to the surrounding world we are reading our physical and corresponding moral revolutions. Nature was so shallow all at once I did not know what had attracted me all my life. I

was therefore encouraged when, going through a field this evening, I was unexpectedly struck with the beauty of an apple-tree. The perception of beauty is a moral test.

I see the tephrosia out through the dusk, a handsome flower. What rich crops this dry hillside has yielded! First I saw the *Viola pedata* here. Then the lupines, and then the snapdragon covered it, and now that the lupines are done, and their pods are left, the tephrosia has taken their place. This small, dry hillside is thus a natural garden. I omit other flowers which grow here, and name only those which, to some extent, cover or possess it. No eighth of an acre in a cultivated garden could be better clothed or with a more pleasing variety from month to month, and while one flower is in bloom you little suspect that which is to succeed and perchance eclipse it. It is a warmly placed, dry hillside beneath a wall, very thinly clad with grass, a natural flower-garden. Of this succession I hardly know which to admire most. It would be pleasant to write the history of such a hillside for one year. First and last you have the colors of the rainbow and more, and the various fragrances which it has not. The blackberry, rose, and dogsbane, also, are now in bloom here.

I hear the sound of distant thunder, though

no cloud is obvious, muttering like the roar of artillery. . . . Thunder and lightning are remarkable accompaniments to our life, as if to remind us that there always is or should be a kind of battle raging. They are signal guns to us.

June 21, 1853. 4.30 A. M. Up river for lilies. . . .

The few lilies begin to open about five.

The morning-glory still fresh at 3 P. M. A fine, large, delicate bell, with waved border, some pure white, some reddened. The buds open perfectly in a vase. I find them open when I wake at 4 A. M. . . .

For the last two or three days it has taken me all the forenoon to wake up.

June 21, 1854. P. M. To Walden, etc. Mitchella in Deep Cut Woods probably a day or two. Its scent is agreeable and refreshing, between the may-flower and rum-cherry bark, or like peach-stone meats. . . .

When I see the dense, shady masses of weeds about water, already an unexplorable maze, I am struck with the contrast between this and the spring when I wandered about in search of the first faint greenness along the borders of the brooks. Then an inch or two of green was something remarkable and obvious afar. Now there is a dense mass of weeds along the water-

side, where the muskrats lurk, and overhead a canopy of leaves conceals the birds and shuts out the sun. It is hard to realize that the seeds of all this growth were buried in that bare, frozen earth. . . .

In the little meadow pool or bog in Hubbard's shore I see two old pouts tending their countless young close to the shore. The former are slate-colored, the latter are about half an inch long, and very black, forming a dark mass from eight to twelve inches in diameter. The old one constantly circles around them, over, and under, and through, as if anxiously endeavoring to keep them together, from time to time moving off five or six feet to reconnoitre. The whole mass of the young, and there must be a thousand of them at least, is incessantly moving, pushing forward and stretching out. They are often in the form of a great pout, apparently keeping together by their own instinct chiefly, now on the bottom, now rising to the top. The old, at any rate, do not appear to be very successful in their apparent efforts to communicate with and direct them. Alone they might be mistaken for pollywogs. At length they break into four parts.

The Indians say this fish hatches its young in a hole in the mud, and that they accompany her for some time afterwards. Yet in Ware's

Smellie it is said that fishes take no care of their young. I think also that I see the young breams in schools hovering over their nests while the old ones are still protecting them.

Rambled up the grassy hollows in the sproutlands north (?) of Goose Pond. I felt a pleasing sense of strangeness and distance. Here in the midst of extensive sproutlands are numerous open hollows, more or less connected, where, for some reason, perhaps frosts, the wood does not spring up, and I was glad of it, filled with a fine, wiry grass, with the paniced andromeda, which loves dry places, now in blossom round the edges, and small black cherries and sand cherries struggling down into them. The woodchuck loves such places, and now wabbles off with a peculiar loud squeak like the sharp bark of a red squirrel, then stands erect at the entrance of his hole, ready to dive into it as soon as you approach. As wild and strange a place as you might find in the unexplored west or east. The quarter of a mile of sproutlands which separates it from the highway seems as complete a barrier as a thousand miles of earth. Your horizon is there all your own. . . .

Again I am attracted by the deep scarlet of the wild moss rose, half open in the grass, all glowing with rosy light.

June 21, 1856. A very hot day, as was

yesterday, 99° at 3 P. M. . . . Saw the night-hawks fly low and touch the water like swallows, at Walden.

June 21, 1860. Having noticed the pine pollen washed up on the shore of three or four ponds in the woods lately, at Ripple Lake, a dozen rods from the nearest pine, also having seen the pollen carried off visibly half a dozen rods from a pitch pine which I had jarred, and rising all the while when there was very little wind, it suggested to me that the air must be full of this fine dust at this season, that it must at times be carried to great distances, and that its presence might be detected remote from pines by examining the edges of pretty large bodies of water where it would be collected to one side by winds and waves from a large area. So I thought over all the small ponds in the township in order to select one or more most remote from the woods or pines, whose shores I might examine and thus test my theory. I could think of none more favorable than this little pond, only four rods in diameter, . . . in John Brown's pasture, which has but few pads in it. It is a small round pond at the bottom of a hollow in the midst of a perfectly bare, dry pasture. The nearest wood of any kind is just thirty-nine rods distant northward, and across a road from the edge of a pond. Any other wood

in other directions is five or six times as far. I knew it was a bad time to try my experiment just after such heavy rains and when the pines are effete, — a little too late. The wind was now blowing quite strong from the northeast, whereas all the pollen I had seen hitherto had been collected on the northeast sides of ponds by a southwest wind. I approached the pond from the northeast, and looking over it, and carefully along the shore there, could detect no pollen. I then proceeded to walk round it, but still could detect none. I then said to myself, if there was any here before the rain and northeast wind, it must have been on the northeast side, and then have been washed over quite to or on the shore. I looked there carefully, stooping down, and was gratified to find after all a distinct yellow line of pollen dust, about half an inch wide, or washing off to two or three times that width, quite on the edge, and some dead twigs which I took up from the wet shore were completely coated with it as with sulphur. This yellow line reached half a rod along the southwest side, and I then detected a little of the dust slightly graying the surface for two or three feet out there. When I thought I had failed, I was much pleased to detect after all this distinct yellow line revealing unmistakably the presence of pines in the neighborhood, and thus

confirming my theory. As chemists detect the presence of ozone in the atmosphere by exposing to it a delicately prepared paper, so the lakes detect for us thus the presence of the pine pollen in the atmosphere. They are our pollenometers. How much of this invisible dust must be floating in the atmosphere, and be inhaled and drunk by us at this season! Who knows but the pollen of some plants may be unwholesome to inhale, and produce the diseases of the season, and but it may be the source of some of the peculiar fragrances in the atmosphere which we cannot otherwise account for.

Of course a large pond will collect the most, and you will find most at the bottom of very deep bays into which the wind blows. I do not believe there is any part of this town into which the pollen of the pine may not fall. The time to examine the ponds this year was, I should say, from the 15th to the 20th of this month. I find that the pines are now effete, especially the pitch-pine. The sterile flowers are turned reddish. The flower of the white pine is lighter colored, and all but a very little indeed is effete. In the white pine there is a dense cluster of twenty or thirty little flowers about the base of this year's shoot. I did not expect to find any pollen, the pond was so small and distant from any wood, but thought I would examine.

June 22, 1839. I have within the last few days come into contact with a pure, uncompromising spirit that is somewhere wandering in the atmosphere, but settles not positively anywhere. Some persons carry about them the air and conviction of virtue, though they themselves are unconscious of it, and are even backward to appreciate it in others. Such it is impossible not to love. Still is their loveliness, as it were, independent of them, so that you seem not to lose it when they are absent, for when they are near, it is like an invisible presence which attends you.

That virtue we appreciate is as much ours as another's. We see so much only as we possess.

June 22, 1840. When we are shocked at vice we express a lingering sympathy with it. Have no affinity for what is shocking.

Do not present a gleaming edge to ward off harm, for that will oftenest attract the lightning, but rather be the all-pervading ether which the lightning does not strike, but purify. Then will the rudeness or profanity of your companion be like a flash across the face of your sky, lighting up and revealing its serene depths. Earth cannot shock the heavens; but its dull vapor and foul smoke make a bright cloud-spot in the ether, and anon the sun, like a cunning artificer, will

cut and paint it, and set it for a jewel in the breast of the sky.

June 22, 1851. The birch is the surveyor's tree. It makes the best stake to look at through the sights of a compass, except when there is snow on the ground. Its white bark was not made in vain. In surveying wood-lots I have frequent occasion to say this is what it was made for.

We are enabled to criticise others only when we are different from, and, in a given particular, superior to, them ourselves. By our aloofness from men and their affairs we are enabled to overlook and criticise them. There are but few men who stand on the hills by the roadside. I am sure only when I have risen above my common sense, when I do not take the foolish view of things which is commonly taken, when I do not live for the low ends for which men commonly live. Wisdom is not common. To what purpose have I senses if I am thus absorbed in affairs. My pulse must beat with Nature. After a hard day's work without a thought, turning my very brain into a mere tool, only in the quiet of evening do I so far recover my senses as to hear the cricket which in fact has been chirping all day. In my better hours I am conscious of the influx of a serene and unquestionable wisdom which partly unfits — and, if I yielded to it

more rememberingly, would wholly unfit — me for what is called the active business of life, for that furnishes nothing on which the eye of reason can rest. What is that other kind of life to which I am continually allured? which alone I love? Is it a life for this world? Can a man feed and clothe himself gloriously who keeps only the truth steadily before him? who calls in no evil to his aid? Are there duties which necessarily interfere with the serene perception of truth? Are our serene moments mere foretastes of heavenly joys gratuitously vouchsafed to us as a consolation? or simply a transient realization of what might be the whole tenor of our lives? — There is the calmness of the lake when there is not a breath of wind; there is the calmness of a stagnant ditch. So is it with us. Sometimes we are clarified and calmed healthily, . . . not by an opiate, but by some unconscious obedience to the all-just laws, so that we become like a still lake of purest crystal, and, without an effort, our depths are revealed to ourselves. All the world goes by us and is reflected in our deeps. Such clarity! obtained by such pure means, by simple living, by honest purpose. We live and rejoice. I awoke to a music which no one about me heard. Whom shall I thank for it? The luxury of wisdom! the luxury of virtue! Are there any intemperate in these things? I feel

my Maker blessing me. To the sane man the world is a musical instrument. The very touch affords an exquisite pleasure. . . . It is hot noon. . . . I am threading an open pitch and white pine wood, easily traversed where the pine needles redden all the ground, which is as smooth as a carpet. Still the blackberries love to creep over this floor, for it is not many years since it was a blackberry field. I hear around me, but never in sight, the many wood-thrushes whetting their steel-like notes. Such keen singers! It takes a fiery heat, the dry pine needles adding to the furnace of the sun, to temper their strain. After what a moderate pause they deliver themselves again, saying ever a new thing, avoiding repetition, methinks answering one another. While most other birds take their siesta, the wood-thrush discharges his song. It is delivered like a piece of jingling steel.

The domestic ox has his horns tipped with brass. This and his shoes are the badges of servitude which he wears, as if he would soon get to jacket and trowsers. I am singularly affected when I look over a herd of reclining oxen in their pasture, and find that every one has these brazen balls on his horns. They are partly humanized so. It is not pure brute. There is art added. . . . The bull has a ring in his nose.

The *Lysimachia quadrifolia* exhibits its small yellow blossoms now in the wood path.

The *Utricularia vulgaris* or bladder-wort, a yellow pea-like flower, has blossomed in stagnant pools.

June 22, 1852. 8 P. M. Up the Union turn-pike. We have had a succession of thunder showers to-day, and at sunset, a rainbow. How moral the world is made! This bow is not utilitarian. Men, I think, are great in proportion as they are moral. After the rain he sets his bow in the heavens! The world is not destitute of beauty. Ask the skeptic who inquires "*Cui bono?*" why the rainbow was made. While men cultivate flowers below, God cultivates flowers above, he takes charge of the pastures in the heavens. Is not the rainbow a faint vision of God's face? How glorious should be the life of man passed under this arch!

Near the river thus late I hear the peet-weet with white barred wings. The scent of the Balm of Gilead leaves fills the road after the rain. There are the amber skies of evening, the colored skies of both morning and evening. Nature adorns these seasons.

Unquestionable truth is sweet, though it were the announcement of our dissolution.

The fire-flies in the meadows are very numerous, as if they had replenished their lights from

the lightning. The far-retreated thunder-clouds low in the south-east horizon and in the north, emitting low flashes which reveal their forms, appear to lift their wings like fire-flies, or it is a steady glare like the glow-worm. Wherever they go, they make a meadow.

June 22, 1853. I do not remember a warmer night than the last. In my attic under the roof, with all windows and doors open, there was still not a puff of the usual coolness of the night. It seemed as if the heat which the roof had absorbed during the day were being brought down upon me. It was far more intolerable than by day. All windows being open I heard the sounds made by pigs and horses in the neighborhood, and of children who were partially suffocated by the heat. It seemed as if it would be something to tell of, the experience of that night, as of the Black Hole of Calcutta in a degree, if one survived it.

The sun down, and I am crossing Fair Haven Hill, sky overcast, landscape dark and still. I see the smooth river in the north reflecting two shades of light, one from the water, another from the surface of the pads which broadly border it on both sides, and the very irregular waving or winding edge of the pads, especially perceptible in this light, makes a very agreeable border, the edge of the film which seeks to bridge over and

inclose the river wholly. These pads are to the smooth water between like a calyx to its flower. The river at such an hour, seen half a mile away, perfectly smooth and lighter than the sky, reflecting the clouds, is a paradisaical scene. What are the rivers around Damascus to this river sleeping around Concord? Are not the Musketaquid and the Assabet, rivers of Concord, fairer than the rivers of the plain? And then the rich warble of the blackbird may occasionally be heard. As I come over the hill, I hear the wood-thrush singing his evening lay. This is the only bird whose note affects me like music, affects the flow and tenor of my thought, my fancy, and imagination. It lifts and exhilarates me. . . . It is a medicative draught to my soul, an elixir to my eyes, and a fountain of youth to all my senses. It changes all hours to an eternal morning. It banishes all trivialness. It reinstates me in my dominion, makes me the lord of creation. This bird is chief musician of my court. He sings in a time, a heroic age with which no event in the village can be contemporary. How can they be contemporary when only the latter is temporary at all? So there is something in the music of the cow-bell sweeter and more nutritious than the milk which the farmers drink. The thrush's song is a *ranz des vaches* to me. I long for wildness, a nature which I cannot put

my foot through, woods where the wood-thrush forever sings, where the hours are early morning ones, and there is dew on the grass, and the day is forever unproved, where I might have a fertile unknown for a soil about me. I would go after the cows, I would watch the flocks of Admetus there forever, only for my board and clothes. A New Hampshire everlasting and unfallen. All that was ripest and fairest in the wilderness and the wild man is preserved and transmitted to us in the strain of the wood-thrush. It is the mediator between barbarism and civilization. It is unrepentant as Greece.

The strawberries may perhaps be considered a fruit of the spring, for they have depended chiefly on the freshness and moisture of spring, and on high lands are already dried up; a soft fruit, a sort of manna which falls in June, and in the meadows they lurk at the shady roots of the grass. Now the blueberry, a somewhat firmer fruit, is beginning. Nuts, the firmest, will be the last.

Is not June the month in which all trees and shrubs do the greatest part of their growing? Will the shoots add much to their length in July?

June 22, 1856. R. W. E. imitates the wood-thrush by "*He willy willy—ha willy willy—O willy O.*"

The song sparrow is said to be imitated in New Bedford thus: "*Maids, maids, maids — hang on your tea kettle—ettle, ettle, ettle, ettle.*"

June 22, 1860. . . . R—— tells me that he saw, in a mud-hole near the river in Sudbury, about a fortnight ago, a pout protecting her ova. They were in a ball about as big as an apple, under which she swam, all exposed, not at all hatched, I think he said on a stick.

Hear the peculiar peep of young golden robins on the elms this morning.

June 23, 1840. We Yankees are not so far from right, who answer one question by asking another. Yes and No are lies. A true answer will not aim to establish anything, but rather to set all well afloat. All answers are in the future, and day answereth to day. Do we think we can anticipate them? In Latin, to respond is to pledge one's self before the gods to do faithfully and honorably, as a man should, in any case. This is good.

How can the language of the poet be more expressive than Nature? He is content that what he has already read in simple characters or indifferently in all be translated into the same again.

He is the true artist whose life is his material. Every stroke of the chisel must enter his own flesh and bones, and not grate dully on marble.

What is any man's discourse to me, if I am not sensible of something in it as steady and cheery as the creak of the crickets? In it the woods must be relieved against the sky. Men tire me when I am not constantly greeted and cheered in their discourse as it were by the flux of sparkling streams.

I cannot see the bottom of the sky, because I cannot see to the bottom of myself. It is the symbol of my own infinity. My eye penetrates as far into the ether as that depth is inward from which my contemporary thought springs.

Not by constraint or severity shall you have access to true wisdom, but by abandonment and childlike mirthfulness. If you would know aught, be gay before it.

June 23, 1851. It is a pleasant sound to me, the squeaking and booming of the night-hawks flying over high, open fields in the woods. They fly like butterflies, not to avoid birds of prey, but apparently to secure their own insect prey. . . . Often you must look a long while before you can detect the mote in the sky from which the note proceeds.

The common cinquefoil, *Potentilla simplex*, greets me with its simple and unobtrusive yellow flower in the grass. The *Potentilla argentea*, hoary cinquefoil, also is now in blossom. *Poten*

tilla sarmentosa, running cinquefoil, we had common enough in the spring.

June 23, 1852. 5 A. M. To Laurel Glen. The bobolink still sings, though not as in May. . . .

The pretty little *Mitchella repens*, with its twin flowers, spots the ground under the pines, its downy-petaled, cross-shaped flowers, and its purplish buds.

The grass is not nearly so wet after thunder showers in the night as after an ordinary dew. Apparently the rain falls so swiftly and hard that it does not rest on the leaves, and then there is no more moisture to be deposited in dew.

The mountain laurel in bloom in cool and shady woods reminds one of the vigor of Nature. It is perhaps a first-rate flower, considering its size and its evergreen leaves. The flower, curiously folded in a ten-angled, pyramidal form, is remarkable. A profusion of flowers with an innocent fragrance. It reminds me of shady mountain-sides where it forms the underwood.

I hear my old Walden owl. Its first note is almost like the somewhat peevish scream or squeal of a child shrugging its shoulders. Then succeed two more moderate and musical ones. — The wood-thrush sings at all hours. I associate it with the cool morning, the sultry noon, and

the serene evening. At this hour it suggests a cool vigor!

P. M. To the mountain laurel in Mason's pasture. It is what I call a *washing* day, such as we sometimes have when buttercups first appear in the spring, an agreeably cool, clear, and breezy day, when all things appear as if washed bright, and shine, and at this season especially the sound of the wind rustling the leaves is like the rippling of a stream. You see the light-colored under-side of the still fresh foliage, and a sheeny light is reflected from the bent grass in the meadow. Haze and sultriness are far off. The air is cleared and cooled by yesterday's thunder-storms. The river, too, has a fine, cool, silvery sparkle or sheen on it. You can see far into the horizon, and you hear the sound of the crickets with such feelings as in the cool morning.

These are very agreeable pastures to me, no house in sight, no cultivation. I sit under a large white oak upon its swelling instep, which makes an admirable seat, and look forth over these pleasant rocky and bushy pastures, where for the most part there are not even cattle grazing, but patches of huckleberry bushes, birches, pitch-pines, barberry bushes, creeping juniper in great circles, its edges curving upward, wild roses spotting the green with red, numerous tufts

of indigo weed, and above all, great gray boulders lying about, far and near, with some barberry bush perchance growing half way up them, and, between all, the short sod of the pasture here and there appears.

The beauty and fragrance of the wild rose are wholly agreeable and wholesome, and wear well. I do not wonder much that men have given the preference to this family of flowers notwithstanding their thorns. It is hardy and more complete in its parts than most flowers, its color, buds, fragrance, leaves, the whole bush, frequently its stem in particular, and finally its red or scarlet hips. Here is the sweet briar in blossom, which to a fragrant flower adds more fragrant leaves. . . .

As I walk through these old deserted wild orchards, half pasture, half huckleberry field, the air is filled with fragrance from I know not what source.

I sit on one of these boulders and look south to Ponkawtasset. Looking west, whence the wind comes, you do not see the under-sides of the leaves, but looking east, every bough shows its under-side. Those of the maples are particularly white. All leaves tremble like aspen leaves.

Two or three large boulders, fifteen or twenty feet square, make a good foreground in the land-

scape, for the gray color of the rock contrasts well with the green of the surrounding and more distant hills and woods and fields. They serve instead of cottages for a wild landscape, as porches or *points d'appui* for the eye.

The red color of cattle also is agreeable in a landscape, or let them be what color they may, red, black, white, mouse-color, or spotted, all which I have seen this afternoon. The cows which, confined to the barn or barnyard all winter, were covered with filth, after roaming in flowery pastures possess now clean and shining coats, and the cowy odor is without alloy. . . .

It seems natural that rocks which have lain under the heavens so long should be gray, as it were an intermediate color between the heavens and the earth. The air is the thin paint in which they have been dipped and brushed with the wind. Water, which is more fluid and like the sky in its nature, is still more like it in color. Time will make the most discordant materials harmonize. . . .

This grassy road now dives into the wood, as if it were entering a cellar or bulkhead, the shadow is so deep. . . . And now I scent the pines. I plucked a blue geranium near the Kibbe place, which appeared to me remarkably fragrant, like lilies and strawberries combined. . . . The sweet fragrance of the swamp pink

fills all the swamps, and when I look down, I see commonly the leaf of the gold-thread. . . .

June 23, 1853. . . . P. M. To White Pond.
. . . After bathing, I paddled to the middle in the leaky boat. The heart-leaf, which grows thinly here, is an interesting plant, sometimes floating at the end of a solitary, almost invisible, thread-like stem, more than six feet long, and again many purplish stems intertwined into loose ropes, or like large skeins of silk, abruptly spreading at top, of course, into a perfectly flat shield, a foot or more in diameter, of small heart-shaped leaves, which rise or fall on their stems as the water is higher or lower. This perfectly horizontal disposition of the leaves in a single plane is an interesting and peculiar feature in water plants of this kind. Leaves and flowers made to float on the dividing line between two elements. . . .

In the warm noons now-a-days I see the spotted, small, yellow eyes of the four-leaved loose-strife looking at me from under the birches and pines springing up in sandy, upland fields. . . .

The other day I saw what I took to be a scarecrow in a cultivated field, and noting how unnaturally it was stuffed out here and there, and how ungainly its arms and legs were, I thought to myself, "Well, it is thus they make these things, they do not stand much about it," but

looking round again, after I had gone by, I saw my scarecrow walking off with a real live man in it.

I was just roused from my writing by the engine's whistle, and, looking out, saw shooting through the town two enormous pine sticks, stripped of their bark, just from the northwest, and going to Portsmouth Navy Yard, they say. . . . Not a tree grows now in Concord to compare with them. They suggest what a country we have to back us up that way. A hundred years ago or more perchance the wind wafted a little winged seed out of its cone to some favorable spot, and this is the result. In ten minutes they were through the township, and perhaps not half a dozen Concord eyes rested on them during their transit.

June 23, 1854. . . . Disturbed three different broods of partridges in my walk this P. M. in different places. In one, they were as big as chickens ten days old, and went flying in various directions a rod or two into the hillside.

In another, the young were two and a half inches long only, not long hatched, making a fine peep. Held one in my hand, where it squatted without winking. . . . Thus we are now in the very midst of them. The young broods are being led forth. The old bird will return mewing, and walk past within ten feet.

June 23, 1856. To New Bedford with R——.
. . . Baywings sang morning and evening about R——'s house, often resting on a bean-pole, and dropping down and running and singing on the bare ground amid the potatoes. Their note somewhat like — “*Come, here-here, there-there,* — [then three rapid notes] *quick-quick-quick,* — or *I'm gone.*”

June 24, 1840. When I read Cudworth I find I can tolerate all, atomists, pneumatologists, atheists, and theists, Plato, Aristotle, Leucippus, Democritus, and Pythagoras. It is the attitude of these men, more than any communication, which charms me. It is so rare to find a man musing. But between them and their commentators there is an endless dispute. If it come to that, that you compare notes, then you are all wrong. As it is, each takes me up into the serene heavens, and paints earth and sky. Any sincere thought is irresistible. It lifts us to the zenith, whither the smallest bubble rises as surely as the largest.

Dr. Cudworth does not consider that the belief in a deity is as great a heresy as exists. Epicurus held that the gods were “of human form, yet were so thin and subtile as that, comparatively with our terrestrial bodies, they might be called incorporeal; they having not so much *carnem* as *quasi-carnem*, nor *sanguinem* as

quasi-sanguinem, a certain kind of aerial or ethereal flesh and blood." This, which Cudworth pronounces "romantical," is plainly as good doctrine as his own, as if any sincere thought were not the best sort of truth.

There is no doubt but the highest morality in the books is rhymed or measured, is in form, as well as substance, poetry. Such is the scripture of all nations. If I were to compile a volume to contain the condensed wisdom of mankind, I should quote no rhythmless line.

Not all the wit of a college can avail to make one harmonious line. It never *happens*. It may get so as to jingle. But a jingle is akin to a jar — jars regularly recurring.

So delicious is plain speech to my ears, as if I were to be more delighted by the whistling of the shot than frightened by the flying of the splinters. I am content, I fear, to be quite battered down and made a ruin of. I out-general myself when I direct my enemy to my vulnerable points.

Sympathy with what is sound makes sport of what is unsound. The loftiest utterance of love is perhaps sublimely satirical.

Cliffs. Evening. Though the sun set a quarter of an hour ago, his rays are still visible, darting half way to the zenith. That glowing morrow in the west flashes on me like

a faint presentiment of morning when I am falling asleep. A dull mist comes rolling from the west, as if it were the dust which day has raised. A column of smoke is rising from the woods yonder to uphold heaven's roof till the light comes again. The landscape, by its patient resting there, teaches me that all good remains with him that waiteth, and that I shall sooner overtake the dawn by remaining here than by hurrying over the hills of the west.

Morning and evening are as like as brother and sister. The sparrow and thrush sing, and the frogs peep, for both.

The woods breathe louder and louder behind me. With what hurry-scurry night takes place! The wagon rattling over yonder bridge is the messenger which day sends back to night, but the despatches are sealed. In its rattle, the village seems to say, "This one sound and I have done."

Red, then, is day's color; at least, it is the color of his heel. He is "stepping westward." We only notice him when he comes and goes.

With noble perseverance the dog bays the stars yonder. I, too, like thee, walk alone in this strange, familiar night, my voice, like thine, beating against its friendly concave, and barking. I hear only my own voice; 10 o'clock.

June 24, 1852. P. M. To White Pond.—

The drifting, white downy clouds are to the landsman what sails on the sea are to him who dwells by the shore, objects of a large, diffusive interest. When the laborer lies on the grass or in the shade for rest, they do not too much tax or weary his attention. They are unobtrusive. I have not heard that white clouds, like white houses, made any one's eyes ache. They are the fitting sails in that ocean whose bounds no man has visited. They are like all great themes, always at hand to be considered, or they float over us unregarded. Far away they float in the serene sky, the most inoffensive of objects, or near and low they smite us with their lightnings and deafen us with their thunder. We know no Ternate or Tidore grand enough whither we can imagine them bound. There are many mares'-tails to-day, if that is the name. What could a man learn by watching the clouds? These objects which go over our heads unobserved are vast and indefinite. Those clouds which have the most distinct and interesting outlines are commonly below the zenith, somewhat low in the heavens, seen on one side. They are among the most glorious objects in Nature. A sky without clouds is a meadow without flowers, a sea without sails. Some days we have the mackerel fleet. But our devilishly industrious laborers rarely lie in the shade. How much better if

they were to take their nooning like the Italians, relax and expand and never do any work in the middle of the day, — enjoy a little sabbath then.

I still perceive that wonderful fragrance from the meadow (?) on the Corner causeway, intense as ever. It is one of those effects whose cause it is best not to know perchance.

White Pond very handsome to-day. The shore alive with pollywogs of large size, which ripple the water on our approach. There is a fine sparkle on the water, though not equal to the fall one quite. The water is very high, so that you cannot walk round it, but it is the more pleasant while you are swimming to see how the trees actually rise out of it on all sides. It bathes their feet. The dog worried a woodchuck half-grown, which did not turn its back and run into its hole, but backed into it, and faced him and us, gritting its teeth and prepared to die. Even this little fellow was able to defend himself against the dog with his sharp teeth. That fierce gritting of their teeth is a remarkable habit with these animals.

The *Linnæa borealis* just going out of bloom. I should have found it long ago. Its leaves densely cover the ground.

June 24, 1853. . . . It is surprising that so many birds find hair enough to line their nests with. If I wish for a horse-hair for my compass

sights, I must go to the stable; but the hair-bird, with her sharp eyes, goes to the road.

June 24, 1856. [New Bedford.] To Sassacowen Pond and to Long Pond. Lunched by the spring on the Brady Farm in Freetown, and there it occurred to me how to get clear water from a spring when the surface is covered with dust or insects. Thrust your dipper down deep in the middle of the spring, and lift it up quickly, straight and square. This will heap up the water in the middle so that the scum will run off.

June 24, 1857. . . . Went to Farmer's Swamp to look for the screech-owl's nest which he had found. . . . I found it at last near the top of a middling-sized white pine, about thirty feet from the ground. As I stood by the tree, the old bird dashed by within a couple of rods, uttering a peculiar mewing sound which she kept up amid the bushes, a blackbird in close pursuit of her. I found the nest empty on one side of the main stem, but close to it, resting on some limbs. It was made of twigs rather less than an eighth of an inch thick, and was almost flat above, only an inch lower in the middle than at the edge, about sixteen inches in diameter and six or eight inches thick. With the twigs in the midst and beneath was mixed sphagnum and sedge from the swamp beneath, and the lining or flooring was coarse strips of grape-vine bark. The whole

pretty firmly matted together. How common and important a material is grape-vine bark for birds' nests! Nature wastes nothing. There were white droppings of the young on the nest, and one large pellet of fur and small bones two and a half inches long. In the meanwhile the old bird was uttering that hoarse, worried note from time to time, somewhat like a partridge's, flying past from side to side, and alighting amid the trees or bushes. When I had descended, I detected one young one, two thirds grown, perched on a branch of the next tree about fifteen feet from the ground, which was all the while staring at me with its great yellow eyes. It was gray, with gray horns and a dark beak. As I walked past near it, it turned its head steadily, always facing me, without moving its body, till it looked directly the opposite way over its back, but never offered to fly. Just then, I thought surely that I heard a puppy faintly barking at me four or five rods distant amid the bushes, having tracked me into the swamp, *what-what, what-what-what*. It was exactly such a noise as the barking of a very small dog or perhaps a fox. But it was the old owl, for I presently saw her making it. . . . She was generally reddish brown or partridge-colored, the breast mottled with dark brown and fawn color . . . and had plain fawn-colored thighs.

June 24, 1860. . . . Saw young blue-birds fully grown yesterday, but with a feeble note and dull colors.

June 25, 1840. Let me see no other conflict but with prosperity. If my path run on before me level and smooth, it is all a mirage. In reality it is steep and arduous as a chamois pass. I will not let the years roll over me like a Jugger-naut car.

We will warm us at each other's fire. Friendship is not such a cold refining process as a double sieve, but a glowing furnace in which all impurities are consumed. Men have learned to touch before they scrutinize, to shake hands and not to stare.

June 25, 1852. Just as the sun was rising this morning under clouds, I saw a rainbow in the western horizon, the lower parts quite bright.

“Rainbow in the morning
Sailors take warning,
Rainbow at night
Sailors' delight.”

A few moments after, it rained heavily and continued to do so for half an hour, and it has continued cloudy as well as cool most of the day.

I observe that young birds are usually of a duller color and more speckled than old ones, as if for their protection in their tender state. They have not yet the markings and the beauty

which distinguish their species, and which betray it often, but by their color are merged in the variety of colors of the season.

To Cliffs. 4 P. M. It is cool and cloudy weather in which the crickets still heard remind you of the fall, a clearer ring to their creak. Also the prunella, cool in the grass, and the Johnswort make you think it late in the year. *Maruta cotula* or Mayweed. Why so named? Just begins, with its strong-scented leaf. It has taken up its position by the roadside close to the ruts — in bad taste. . . .

The bobolink and golden robin are occasionally heard now-a-days.

The *Convolvulus sepium*, bind-weed. Morning glory is the best now. It always refreshes me to see it. . . . “In the morning and cloudy weather,” says Gray. I associate it with holiest morning hours. It may preside over my morning walks and thoughts. There is a flower for every mood of the mind.

Methinks roses oftenest display their bright colors which invariably attract all eyes and betray them, against a dark ground, as the dark green or the shady recesses of other bushes and copses, where they show to best advantage. Their enemies do not spare the open flower for an hour. Hence, if for no other reason, their buds are most beautiful. Their promise of per-

fect and dazzling beauty, when their buds are just beginning to expand, beauty which they can hardly contain, as in most youths, commonly surpasses the fulfillment of their expanded flowers. The color shows fairest and brightest in the bud. The expanded flower has no higher or deeper tint than the swelling bud exposed. This raised a dangerous expectation. The season when wild roses are in bloom should have some preëminence, I think.

Linaria vulgaris, butter-and-eggs, toad-flax, on Fair Haven. Was seen the 19th. It is rather rich colored, with a not disagreeable scent. It is called a troublesome weed. Flowers must not be too profuse and obtrusive, else they acquire the reputation of weeds. It grows almost like a cotton-grass so above and distinct from its leaves, in wandering patches higher and higher up the side of the hill.

One man lies in his words and gets a bad reputation, another in his manners, and enjoys a good one.

The air is clear as if a cool, dewy brush had swept the meadows of all haze. A liquid coolness invests them, as if their midnight aspect were suddenly revealed to midday. The mountain outline is remarkably distinct and the intermediate earth appears more than usually scooped out like a vast saucer sloping upward to its sharp

mountain rim. The mountains are washed in air. The sunshine now seen far away on fields and hills in the northwest looks cool and wholesome like the yellow grass in the meadows. I am too late for the white-pine flowers. The cones are half an inch long and green, and the male flowers effete. The sun now comes out bright, though westerling, and shines on Fair Haven, which, rippled by the wind, is of an unusual clay-muddy color. . . . There are little recesses a rod or two square in bosky woods which have not grown fast, where a fine wiry grass invites to lie down in the shade, under the shrub-oaks on the edge of the well-meadow-head field.

8.30 P. M. To Conantum. Moon half full. Fields dusky. The evening star and one other bright one near the moon. It is a cool, but pretty still night. Methinks I am less thoughtful than I was last year at this time. The flute I now hear from the Depot field does not find such caverns to echo and resound in within me, no such answering depths. Our minds should echo at least as many times as a mammoth cave to every musical sound. It should awaken reflections in us.

Now his day's work is done, the laborer plays his flute, only possible at this hour. Contrasted with his work, what an accomplishment! Some drink and gamble. He plays some well-known

march. But the music is not in the tune ; it is in the sound. It does not proceed from the trading nor the political world. He practices this ancient art. . . .

I hear the bull-frog's trump from far. Now I turn down the Corner road. At this quiet hour the evening wind is heard to moan in the hollows of your face, mysterious, spirit-like, conversing with you. . . . The whippoorwill sings. I hear a laborer going home coarsely singing to himself. Though he has scarcely had a thought all day, killing weeds, at this hour he sings or talks to himself. His humble, earthly contentment gets expression. It is kindred in its origin with the notes or music of many creatures. A more fit and natural expression of his mood this humming than conversation is wont to be. — The fire-flies appear to be flying, though they may be stationary on the grass stems, for their perch and the nearness of the ground are obscured by the darkness, and now you see one here and then another there, as if it were one in motion. Their light is singularly bright and glowing to proceed from a living creature. Nature loves variety in all things, and so she adds glow-worms to fire-flies, though I have not noticed any this year. — The great story of the night is the moon's adventures with the clouds. What innumerable encounters she has had with them ! When I

enter on the moonlit causeway where the light is reflected from the glistening alder leaves, and their deep, dark, liquid shade beneath strictly bounds the firm, damp road and narrows it, it seems like autumn. The rows of willows completely fence the way, and appear to converge in perspective as I had not noticed by day. — The bull-frogs are of various tones. Some horse in a distant pasture whinnies. Dogs bark. There is that dull dumping sound of frogs, as if a bubble containing the lifeless, sultry air of day burst on the surface, a belching sound. When two or more bull-frogs trump together, it is a ten-pound-ten note. — In Conant's meadow I hear the gurgling of unwearied water, the trill of a toad, and go through the cool, primordial, liquid air that has settled there. As I sit on the great door step, the loose clapboards on the old house rattle in the wind weirdly, and I seem to hear some wild mice running about on the floor, sometimes a loud crack from some weary timber trying to change its position. How distant day and its associations! The night wind comes cold and whispering, murmuring weirdly from distant mountain tops. No need to climb the Andes or Himalayas; for brows of lowest hills are highest mountain tops in cool, moonlight nights. Is it a cuckoo's chuckling note I heard? Occasionally there is something enormous and mon-

strous in the size and distance of objects. A rock is it, or an elephant asleep? Are these trees on an upland or a lowland, or do they skirt a sea beach? When I get there, shall I look off on the sea? — The white weed is the only obvious flower. I see the tops of the rye wave, and grain fields are more interesting than by day. The water is dull-colored, hardly more light than a rye field.

You may not suspect that the milk of the cocoanut, which is imported from the other side of the world, is mixed. So pure do some truths come to us, I trust.

What a mean and wretched creature is man. By and by some Dr. Morton may be filling your cranium with white mustard-seed to learn its internal capacity. Of all ways invented to come at a knowledge of a living man, this seems to me the worst, as it is the most belated. You would learn more by once paring the nails of the living subject. There is nothing out of which the spirit has more completely departed, and in which it has left fewer significant traces.

June 25, 1853. P. M. To Assabet bathing-place. Found an unusual quantity of Amelanchier berries. I think of the two common kinds, one a taller bush twice as high as my head, with thinner and lighter colored leaves, and larger, or at least somewhat softer, fruit, the other, a

shorter bush, with more rigid and darker leaves, and dark, blue berries, with often a sort of wooliness on them. Both these are now in their prime. These are the first berries after strawberries, or the first and, I think, the sweetest *bush* berries, somewhat like high blueberries, but not so hard. Much eaten by insects, worms, etc., as big as the largest blueberries or peas. These are the "service berries" which the Indians of the north and the Canadians use, "*la poire*" of the latter. They, by a little, precede the early blueberry (though H—— brought two quarts of the last, day before yesterday), being now in their prime, while blueberries are but just beginning. I never saw nearly so many before. It is a very agreeable surprise. I hear the cherry-birds and others about me, no doubt attracted by this fruit. It is owing to some peculiarity of the season that they bear fruit. I have picked a quart of them for a pudding. I felt all the while I was picking them, in the low, light, waving, shrubby wood they make, as if I were in a foreign country. Several old farmers say, "Well, though I have lived seventy years, I never saw nor heard of them." I think them a delicious berry. No doubt they require only to be more abundant every year to be appreciated.

I think it must be the purple finch with the crimson head and shoulders which I see and

hear singing so sweetly and variedly in the garden once or twice to-day. It sits on a bean pole or fence pick. It has a little of the martin warble and of the canary bird.

June 25, 1854. A green bittern apparently, awkwardly alighting on the trees, and uttering its hoarse *zarry* note, *zscheow* — *xskeow* — *xskeow*.

Through June the song of the birds is gradually growing fainter.

June 25, 1858. P. M. To Conantum. — Sitting on the Conantum House sill still left, I see two and perhaps three young striped squirrels, two thirds grown, within fifteen or twenty feet, one or more on the wall, another on the ground. Their tails are rather imperfect as well as their bodies. They are running about, yet rather feebly, nibbling the grass, etc., or sitting upright, looking very cunning. The broad, white line above and below the eye make it look very long as well as large, and the black and white stripe on its sides, curved as it sits, are very conspicuous and pretty. Who striped the squirrel's side? Several times I saw two approach each other, and playfully, and as it were affectionately, put their paws and noses to each other's faces. This was done very deliberately. There was no rudeness nor excessive activity in the sport. At length the old one appears, larger

and much more bluish. She is shy, and with a sharp cluck or chip calls the others gradually to her, and draws them off along the wall, they from time to time frisking ahead of her, then she ahead of them. The hawks must get many of these inexperienced creatures.

June 26, 1840. The best poetry has never been written, for when it might have been, the poet forgot it, and when it was too late, remembered it.

The highest condition of art is artlessness.

Truth is always paradoxical.

He will get to the goal first who stands stillest.

By sufferance you may escape suffering.

He who resists not at all will never surrender.

When a dog runs at you, whistle for him.

Say "Not so," and you will outcircle the philosophers.

Stand outside the wall, and no harm can reach you; the danger is that you be walled in with it.

June 26, 1851. — Visited a menagerie this afternoon. I am always surprised to see the same spots and stripes on wild beasts from Africa and Asia, and also from South America, on the Brazilian tiger and the African leopard, and their general similarity. All these wild animals, lions,

tigers, chetas, leopards, etc., have one hue, tawny commonly, and spotted or striped, what you may call pard color, a color and marking which I had not associated with America. These are wild animals (beasts). What constitutes the difference between a wild beast and a tame one? How much more human the one than the other! Growling, scratching, roaring, with whatever beauty and gracefulness, still untamable, this royal Bengal tiger or the leopard. They have the character and the importance of another order of men. The majestic lion, the king of beasts, he must retain his title.

I was struck by the gem-like, changeable, greenish reflections from the eyes of the grizzly bear, so glassy that you never saw the surface of the eye. They are quite demonic. Its claws, though extremely large and long, look weak and made for digging or pawing the earth and leaves. It is unavoidable, the idea of transmigration; not merely a fancy of the poets, but an instinct of the race.

June 26, 1852. I have not put darkness, duskiess enough into my night and moonlight walks. Every sentence should contain some twilight or night. At least the light in it should be the yellow or creamy light of the moon, or the fine beams of stars, and not the white light of day. The peculiar dusky serenity of the sen-

tences must not allow the reader to forget that it is evening or night, without my saying that it is dark. Otherwise he will, of course, presume a daylight atmosphere.

The earliest water surfaces, as I remember, as soon as the ice is melted, present as fair and matured scenes, as soft and warm, reflecting the sky through the clear atmosphere, as in midsummer, far in advance of the earth. The earliest promise of the summer, is it not in the smooth reflecting surface of woodland lakes in which the ice is just melted? Those liquid eyes of Nature, blue, or black, or even hazel, deep or shallow, clear or turbid, green next the shore, the color of their iris.

P. M. By boat up the Assabet.

The *Nymphæa odorata*, sweet water lily, pond lily, in bloom. A superb flower, our lotus, queen of the waters. Now is the solstice in still waters. How sweet, innocent, wholesome its fragrance, how pure its white petals, though its root is in the mud. It must answer in my mind for what the orientals say of the lotus flower. Probably the first a day or two since. To-morrow, then, will be the first Sabbath when the young men, having bathed, will walk slowly and soberly to church, in their best clothes, each with a lily in his hand or bosom, with as long a stem as he could get. At least I used to see

them go by and come into church, when I used to go myself, smelling a pond lily, so that the flower is to some extent associated with bathing on Sabbath mornings and going to church, its odor contrasting with and atoning for that of the sermon. We have roses on the land and lilies on the water. Both land and water have done their best, now just after the longest day. Nature says, You behold the utmost I can do. And the young women carry their finest roses on the other hand. Roses and lilies. The floral days. The red rose, with the intense color of many suns concentrated, spreads its tender petals perfectly fair, its flower not to be overlooked, modest, yet queenly, on the edges of shady copses and meadows, against its green leaves, surrounded by blushing buds, of perfect form, not only beautiful, but rightfully commanding attention, unspoiled by the admiration of gazers. And the water lily floats on the surface of slow waters, amid rounded shields of leaves, bucklers red beneath, which simulate a green field, perfuming the air. Each instantly the prey of the spoiler, the rose-bug and water insects. How transitory the perfect beauty of the rose and the lily. The highest, intensest color belongs to the land; the purest, perchance, to the water. The lily is perhaps the only flower which all are eager to pluck. It may be partly

because of its inaccessibility to most. The farmers' sons will frequently collect every bud that shows itself above the surface within half a mile. They are so infested by insects, and it is so rare you get a perfect one which has opened itself (though these only are perfect), that the buds are commonly plucked and opened by hand. I have a faint recollection of pleasure derived from smoking dried lily stems, before I was a man. I had commonly a supply of these. I have never smoked anything more noxious. I used to amuse myself with making the yellow, drooping stamens rise and fall by blowing through the pores of the long stem.

I see the nests of the bream, each with its occupant, scooped out in the sunny water, and partly shaded by the leaves of the *limnanthemum* or floating heart now in blossom and the *Potamogeton natans*, or pondweed. — Under the cool, glossy green leaves of small swamp white oaks, and leaning against their scaly bark near the water, you see the wild roses five or six feet high looking forth from the shade, but almost every bush and copse near the river or in low land which you approach these days, emits the noisome odor of the carrion-flower, so that you would think that all the dead dogs had drifted to that shore. All things, both beautiful and ugly, agreeable and offensive, are expressed in

flowers, all kinds and degrees of beauty, and all kinds of foulness. For what purpose has Nature made a flower to fill the low lands with the odor of carrion. Just so much beauty and virtue as there is in the world, and just so much ugliness and vice, you see expressed in flowers. Each human being has his flower which expresses his character. In them nothing is concealed, but everything published. Many a villager whose garden bounds on the river, when he approaches the willows and cornels by the river's edge, thinks that some carrion has lodged on his shore, when it is only the carrion-flower he smells. . . .

All shadows or shadowlets on the sandy bottom of the river are interesting. All are circular, almost lenticular, for they appear to have thickness. Even the shadows of grass blades are broken into several separate circles of shade. Such is the fabulous or Protean character of the water light. A skater insect casts seven flat or lenticular shades, four smaller in front, two larger behind, and the smallest of all in the centre. From the shadow on the bottom you cannot guess the form on the surface. Everything is transmuted by the water. The shadow, however small, is black within, edged with a sunny halo, corresponding to the day's twilight, and a certain liquidness is imparted to the whole by the incessant motion from the undulation of the surface. The oblong

leaves of the *Potamogeton hybridus* (?) now in seed, make a circular shadow also, somewhat coin-like, a halo produced by the thick atmosphere which the water is. These bright, sparkling brook and river bottoms are the true gold washings, where the stream has washed the pebbly earth so long.

It is pleasant to walk in sproutlands now in June; there is so much light reflected from the underside of the new foliage. The rich meadows, too, reflect much of the bluish light from the bent grass. We land on the south side opposite Barrett's. — There are some interesting, retired natural meadows here, concealed by the woods near the river bank, which are never cut, long, narrow, and winding, full of a kind of stiff, dry, cut grass and tender meadow-sweet and occasional cranberry patches now in bloom, with a high border, almost as high as the meadows are wide, of maples, birches, swamp white oaks, alders, etc. The flashing, silvery light from the under-sides of the maple leaves, high, rippling, washing towers far and near, — this cool, refreshing, breezy, flashing light is very memorable. When you think you have reached the end of such a winding meadow, you pass between two alders where the copses meet, and emerge into another meadow beyond. I suppose that these meadows are as nearly in their primitive state as any that

we see. So this country looked, in one of its aspects, a thousand years ago. What difference to the meadow-sweet, or the swamp white oak, or to the silver flashing maple leaves a thousand years ago or to-day! . . . The prevalence of the meadow-sweet at least distinguishes these meadows from the ordinary ones.

Forded the river with our clothes on our heads. The rounded heaps of stones, whether made by the suckers or lamprey-eels, are among the curiosities of the river. From the sand-bank we looked at the arched bridge while a traveler, in a simple carriage with a single pair of wheels, went over it. It interested me because the stratum of earth beneath him was so thin that he appeared quite in the air. While he sat with his elbows on his knees entertaining all earthly thoughts, or thoughtless, we looked directly beneath him through much air to a fair and distant landscape beyond. C—— says, that is what men go to Italy to see. I love to see the firm earth mingled with the sky, like the spray of the sea tossed up. Is there not always, wherever an arch is constructed, a latent reference to its beauty. The arch supports itself like the stars, by gravity. "*Semper cadendo nunquam cadit.*" By always falling it never falls.

June 26, 1853. At Cliffs. The air warmer, but wonderfully clear after the hail-storm. I do

not remember when I have seen it more clear. The mountains and horizon outlines on all sides are distinct and near. Nobscot has lost all its blue, is only a more distant hill-pasture, and the northwest mountains are too terrestrial a blue and too firmly defined to be mistaken for clouds. Billerica is as near as Bedford commonly. I see new spires far in the south, and on every side the horizon is extended many miles. It expands me to look so much farther over the rolling surface of the earth. Where I had seen or fancied only a hazy forest outline, I see successive swelling hills and remote towns. So often to the luxurious and hazy summer in our minds, when, like Fletcher's "Martyrs in Heaven," we,

"estranged from all misery
As far as Heaven and Earth discoasted lie,
Swelter in quiet waves of immortality,"

some great chagrin succeeds, some chilling cloud comes over. But when it is gone, we are surprised to find that it has cleared the air, summer returns without its haze, we see infinitely farther into the horizon on every side, and the boundaries of the world are enlarged.

A beautiful sunset about half-past seven ; just clouds enough in the west (we are on Fair Haven hill) ; they arrange themselves about the western gate. And now the sun sinks out of sight just on the north side of Watatic, and the

mountains north and south are at once a dark indigo blue, for they had been darkening an hour or more. Two small clouds are left on the horizon between Watatic and Monadnock, their sierra edges all on fire. Three minutes after the sun is gone, there is a bright and memorable afterglow in his path, and a brighter and more glorious light falls on the clouds above the portal. His car borne farther round brings us into the angle of exidence. Those little sierra clouds look like two castles on fire, and I see the fire through the windows. The low western horizon glows now, five or six minutes after sunset, with a delicate salmon color tinged with rose, deepest where the sun disappeared, and fading off upward. North and south are deep blue cloud islands in it. When I invert my head those delicate salmon-colored clouds look like a celestial Sahara, sloping gently upward, a plane inclined upward, to be traveled by caravans bound heavenward, with blue oases in it.

June 26, 1856. [New Bedford.] Rode to Sconticut Neck or Point, in Fair Haven, five or six miles. . . . Heard of and sought out the hut of Martha Simons, the only pure-blooded Indian left about New Bedford. She lives alone on the narrowest part of the Neck, near the shore, in sight of New Bedford. Her hut stands some twenty-five rods from the road on a small tract

of Indian land, now wholly hers. It was formerly exchanged by a white man for some better land, then occupied by Indians at Westport, which he wanted. So said a Quaker minister, her neighbor. The squaw was not at home when we first called. It was a little hut, not so big as mine. No garden, only some lettuce amid the thin grass in front, and a great pile of clam and quahog shells one side. Ere long she came from the seaside and we called again. We knocked and walked in, and she asked us to sit down. She had half an acre of the real tawny Indian face, broad with high cheek bones, black eyes, and straight hair, originally black, but now a little gray, parted in the middle. Her hands were several shades darker than her face. She had a peculiarly vacant expression, perhaps characteristic of the Indian, and answered our questions listlessly, without being interested or implicated, mostly in monosyllables, as if hardly present there. To judge from her physiognomy, she might have been King Philip's own daughter. Yet she could not speak a word of Indian, and knew nothing of her race, said she had lived with the whites, gone out to service to them when seven years old. Had lived part of her life at Squaw Betty's Neck, Assawampsett Pond. . . . She said she was sixty years old, but was probably nearer seventy. She sat with her

elbows on her knees and her face in her hands, and that peculiar vacant stare, perhaps looking out the window between us, not repelling us in the least, but perfectly indifferent to our presence. She was born on that spot. Her grandfather also lived on the same spot, though not in the same house. He was the last of her race who could speak Indian. She had heard him pray in Indian, but could only understand "Jesus Christ." Her only companion was a miserable tortoise-shell kitten, which took no notice of us. She had a stone chimney, a small cooking stove without fore-legs and set up on bricks, within it, and a bed covered with dirty bed-clothes. Said she hired out her field as pasture; better for her than to cultivate it. . . . The question she answered with most interest was, "What do you call that plant?" and I reached her the aletris from my hat. She took it, looked at it a moment, and said, "That 's husk-root. It 's good to put into bitters for a weak stomach." The last year's light-colored and withered leaves surround the present green star like a husk. This must be the origin of the name. Its root is described as intensely bitter. I ought to have had my hat full of plants.

June 27, 1856. [New Bedford.] P.M. Went with R—— and his boys in the steamer Eagle's Wing, with a crowd and band of music, to the

northeast end of Naushon . . . some fifteen miles from New Bedford. About two hours going. Saw all the Elizabeth Isles, going and coming. They are mostly bare, except the east end of Naushon. This island is some seven miles long by one to two wide. I had some two and a half hours there. I was surprised to find such a noble, primitive wood, chiefly beech, such as the English poets celebrate, and oak (black oak, I think), large and spreading, like pasture oaks with us, though in a wood. The ground under the beeches was covered with the withered leaves, and peculiarly free from vegetation. On the edge of a swamp I saw great tupelos running up particularly tall, without lower branches, two or three feet in diameter, with a rough, light-colored bark. Saw a common wild grape-vine running over a beech which was apparently flattened out by it, which vine measured at six feet from the ground twenty-three inches in circumference. It was larger below where it had already forked. At five feet from the ground it divided into three great branches. It did not rise directly, but with a great half spiral sweep. . . . No sight could be more primeval. It was partly or chiefly dead. This was in the midst of the woods by a path side. Just beyond we started up two deer.

June 27, 1840. . . . A dull, cloudy day ; no

sun shining. The clink of the smith's hammer sounds feebly over the roofs, and the wind is sighing gently as if dreaming of cheerfuller days. The farmer is ploughing in yonder field, craftsmen are busy in the shops, the trader stands behind the counter, and all works go steadily forward. But I will have nothing to do, will tell Fortune that I play no game with her, and she may reach me in my Asia of serenity and indolence, if she can.

For an impenetrable shield stand inside yourself.

He was no artist, but an artisan, who first made shields of brass.

Unless we meet religiously, we profane one another. What was the consecrated ground around the temple we have used as no better than a domestic court. Our friend's is as holy a shrine as any God's, to be approached with sacred love and awe. Veneration is the measure of love. Our friend answers ambiguously, and sometimes before the question is propounded, like the oracle of Delphi. He forbears to ask explanation, but doubts and surmises darkly with full faith, as we silently ponder our fates. In no presence are we so susceptible to shame. Our hour is a sabbath; our abode, a temple; our gifts, peace offerings; our conversation, a communion; our silence, a prayer. In profanity we

are absent; in holiness, near; in sin, estranged; in innocence, reconciled.

June 27, 1852. P.M. To Bear Hill, Lincoln. The epilobium, spiked willow herb, shows its pale purple spikes (pinkish?). I will set it down to the 20th. *Epilobium angustifolium*, one of the most conspicuous flowers at this season, on dry, open hillsides in the woods, sproutlands. . . . I still perceive that ambrosial sweetness from the meadows in some places. Give me the strong, rank scent of ferns in the spring for vigor, just blossoming late in the spring. A healthy and refined nature would always derive pleasure from the landscape. As long as the bodily vigor lasts, man sympathizes with Nature.

Looking from Bear Hill I am struck by the yellowish green of meadows, almost like an ingrained sunlight. Perhaps they have that appearance, because the fields generally incline now to a reddish-brown green. The freshness of the year in most fields is already past. The tops of the early grass are white, killed by the worms.

It is somewhat hazy, yet I can just distinguish Monadnock. It is a good way to describe the density of a haze to say how distant a mountain can be distinguished through it, or how near a hill is obscured by it.

Saw a very large white-ash tree, three and a half feet in diameter, . . . which was struck by lightning the 22d. The lightning apparently struck the top of the tree and scorched the bark and leaves for ten or fifteen feet downward, then began to strip off the bark and enter the wood, making a ragged, narrow furrow or crack, till reaching one of the upper limbs it apparently divided, descending on both sides and entering deeper and deeper into the wood. At the first general branching it had got full possession of the tree in its centre, and tossed off the main limbs, butt foremost, making holes in the ground where they struck, and so it went down in the midst of the trunk to the earth, where it apparently exploded, rending the trunk into six segments, whose tops, ten or twenty feet long, were rayed out on every side at an angle of about 30° from a perpendicular, leaving the ground bare directly under where the tree had stood, though they were still fastened to the earth by their roots. The lightning appeared to have gone off through the roots, furrowing them as it had furrowed the branches, and through the earth, making a furrow like a plow, four or five rods in one direction, and in another passing through the cellar of the neighboring house, about thirty feet distant, scorching the tin milk-pans, and throwing dirt into the milk,

and coming out the back side of the house in a furrow, splitting some planks there. The main body of the tree was completely stripped of bark, which was cast in every direction, two hundred feet, and large pieces of the inside of the tree were hurled, with tremendous force, in various directions, — one into the side of a shed, smashing it, another burying itself in a wood-pile. The heart of the tree lay by itself. Probably a piece as large as a man's leg could not have been sawed out of the trunk, which would not have had a crack in it, and much of it was very finely splintered. The windows in the house were broken and the inhabitants knocked down by the concussion. All this was accomplished in an instant by a kind of fire out of the heavens called lightning or a thunderbolt, accompanied by a crashing sound. For what purpose? The ancients called it Jove's bolt, with which he punished the guilty, and we moderns understand it no better. There was displayed a Titanic force, some of that force which made and can unmake the world. The brute forces are not yet wholly tamed. Is this of the character of a wild beast? or is it guided by intelligence and mercy? If we trust our natural impressions, it is a manifestation of brutish force, or vengeance more or less tempered with justice. Yet it is our consciousness

of sin probably which suggests the idea of vengeance, and to a righteous man it would be merely sublime without being awful. This is one of those cases in which a man hesitates to refer his safety to his prudence, as the putting up of a lightning-rod. There is no lightning-rod by which the sinner can avert the avenging Nemesis. Though I should put up a rod, if its utility were satisfactorily demonstrated to me, yet, so mixed are we, I should feel myself safe or in danger quite independently of the senseless rod. There is a degree of faith and righteousness in putting up a rod as well as in trusting without one, though the latter, which is the rarer, I feel to be the more effectual rod of the two. It only suggests that impunity in respect to all forms of death or disease, whether sickness or casualty, is only to be attained by moral integrity. It is the faith with which we take medicine that cures us. Otherwise we may be cured into greater disease. In a violent tempest we both fear and trust. We are ashamed of our fear, for we know that a righteous man would not suspect danger, nor incur any. Wherever a man feels fear, there is an avenger. The savage's and the civilized man's instincts are right. Science affirms too much. Science assumes to show *why* the lightning strikes a tree, but it does not show us the moral *why* any better

than our instincts did. It is full of presumption. Why should trees be struck? It is not enough to say, Because they are in the way. Science answers, "*Non scio*, I am ignorant." All the phenomena of Nature need to be seen from the point of view of wonder and awe, like lightning; and, on the other hand, the lightning itself needs to be regarded with serenity, as are the most innocent and familiar phenomena. There runs through the righteous man's spinal column a rod with burnished points to heaven, which conducts safely away into the earth the flashing wrath of Nemesis so that it merely clarifies the air. This moment the confidence of the righteous man erects a sure conductor within him; the next, perchance, a timid staple diverts the fluid to his vitals. If a mortal be struck with a thunderbolt *cælo sereno*, it is naturally felt to be more awful and vengeful. Men are probably nearer to the essential truth in their superstitions than in their science. Some places are thought to be particularly exposed to lightning, some oaks on hill tops, for instance.

I meet the partridge with her brood in the woods, a perfect little hen. She spreads her tail into a fan and beats the ground with her wings fearlessly, within a few feet of me, to attract my attention while her young disperse.

But they keep up a faint, wiry kind of peep which betrays them, while she mews and squeaks as if giving them directions. — Chestnut trees are budded. — I picked a handful or two of blueberries. These and huckleberries deserve to be celebrated, such simple, wholesome, universal fruits, food for the gods and for aboriginal men. They are so abundant that they concern our race much. Tournefort called some of this genus at least, *Vitis-Idæa*, which apparently means the vine of Mount Ida. I cannot imagine any country without this kind of berry. Berry of berries, on which men live like birds, still covering our hills as when the red men lived here. Are they not the principal wild fruit?

June 27, 1853. 4.30 A. M. To Island by river. . . . Saw a little pickerel with a minnow in its mouth. It was a beautiful little silver-colored minnow, two inches long, with a broad stripe down the middle. The pickerel held it crosswise near the tail, as he had seized it, and as I looked down on him, he worked the minnow along in his mouth toward the head, and then swallowed it head foremost. Was this instinct?

June 27, 1859. . . . P. M. To Walden. . . . I find an *Attacus Luna* half hidden under a skunk cabbage leaf, with its back to the ground and motionless, on the edge of a swamp. The

underside is a particularly pale, hoary green. It is somewhat greener above, with a slightly purplish brown border on the front edge of its front wings, and a brown, yellowish, and whitish eye-spot in the middle of each wing. It is very sluggish, and allows me to turn it over and cover it up with another leaf, sleeping till the night comes. It has more relation to the moon by its pale, hoary green color, and its sluggishness by day, than by the form of its tail.

June 28, 1840. The profane never hear music ; the holy ever hear it. It is God's voice, the divine breath audible. Where it is heard, there is a Sabbath. It is omnipotent. All things obey it, as they obey virtue. It is the herald of virtue. It passes by sorrow, for grief hangs its harp on the willows.

June 28, 1854. Tall anemone. *Pontederia to-morrow.*

June 28, 1857. . . . I hear on all hands these days, from the elms and other trees, the twittering peep of young golden robins which have recently left their nests, and apparently indicate their locality to their parents by thus incessantly peeping all day long.

June 28, 1860. . . . I meet to-day with a wood-tortoise which is eating the leaves of the early potentillas, and soon after another . . . deliberately eating sorrel. It was evidently

quite an old one, its back being worn quite smooth, and its motions peculiarly sluggish. It continued to eat when I was within a few feet, holding its head high and biting down at it, each time bringing away a piece of the leaf. It made you think of an old and sick tortoise eating some salutary herb to cure itself with, and reminded me of the stories of the ancients, who, I *think*, made the tortoises thus cure themselves with dittany or origanum when bitten by a venomous snake. It impressed me as if it must know the virtues of herbs well, and could select the one best suited to the condition of its body. When I came nearer, it at once drew in its head. Its back was smooth and yellowish, a venerable tortoise. When I moved off, it at once withdrew into the woods.

June 29, 1840. Of all phenomena my own race are the most mysterious and undiscoverable. For how many years have I striven to meet one, even on common, manly ground, and have not succeeded!

June 29, 1851. There is a great deal of white clover this year. In many fields where there has been no clover seed sown, for many years at least, it is more abundant than the red, and the heads are nearly as large. Also pastures which are close cropped, and where I think there was little or no clover last year, are spotted white

with an humbler growth. And everywhere by roadsides, garden borders, etc., even where the sward is trodden hard, the small white heads on short stems are sprinkled. As this is the season for the swarming of bees, and this clover is very attractive to them, it is probably the more difficult to secure them; at any rate it is more important, now that they can make honey so fast. It is an interesting inquiry why this year is so favorable to the growth of clover.

Swamp pink I see for the first time this season.

How different is day from day! Yesterday the air was filled with a thick, fog-like haze, so that the sun did not once shine with ardor, and everything was so tempered under this thin veil that it was a luxury merely to be out doors. You were the less out for it. The shadows of the apple trees even early in the afternoon were remarkably distinct. The landscape wore a classical smoothness. Every object was as in picture with a glass over it. I saw some hills on this side the river looking from Conantum, on which the grass being of a yellow tinge, though the sun did not shine out on them, they had the appearance of being shone upon peculiarly. It was merely an unusual yellow tint of the grass. The mere surface of the water was an object for the eye to linger on.

I thought that one peculiarity of my "Week" was its *hypæthral* character, to use an epithet applied to those Egyptian temples which are open to the heavens above, *under the ether*. I thought that it had little of the atmosphere of the house about it, but might have been written wholly, as in fact it was to a great extent, out of doors. It was only at a late period in writing it, as it happened, that I used any phrases implying that I lived in a house or led a domestic life. I trust it does not smell so much of the study and library, even of the poet's attic, as of the fields and woods, that it is a hypæthral or unroofed book, lying open under the ether, and permeated by it, open to all weathers, not easy to be kept on a shelf.

At a distance in the meadow I hear still, at long intervals, the hurried commencement of the bobolink's strain, the bird just dashing into song, which is as suddenly checked, as it were, by the warder of the seasons, and the strain is left incomplete forever. [P. S.] I have since heard some complete strains.

The voice of the crickets, heard at noon from deep in the grass, allies day to night. It is unaffected by sun and moon. It is a midnight sound heard at noon, a midday sound heard at midnight.

I observed some mulleins growing on the west

ern slope of the sandy railroad embankment, in as warm a place as can easily be found, where the heat was reflected oppressively from the sand at three o'clock P. M. this hot day. Yet the green and living leaves felt rather cool than otherwise to the hand, but the dead ones at the root were quite warm. The living plant thus preserves a cool temperature in the hottest exposure, as if it kept a cellar below from which cooling liquors were drawn up.

How awful is the least unquestionable meanness, when we cannot deny that we have been guilty of it. There seem to be no bounds to our unworthiness.

June 29, 1852. P. M. On the North River. . . . The *Rana halecina*? shad-frog is our handsomest; bronze, striped with brown spots edged and intermixed with bright green. . . . The frogs and tortoises striped and spotted for concealment. The painted tortoise's throat held up above the pads, streaked with yellowish, makes it the less obvious. The mud turtle is the color of the mud; the wood frog and the hylodes, of the dead leaves; the bull-frog, of the pads; the toad, of the earth, etc.; the tree-toad, of the bark.

In my experience nothing is so opposed to poetry, not crime, as business. It is a negation of life.

The wind exposes the red under-sides of the white lily pads. This is one of the aspects of the river now. The bud-bearing stem of this plant is a little larger, but otherwise like the leaf stem, and coming like it from the long, large root. It is interesting to pull up the lily roots with flowers and leaves attached, and see how it sends its buds upward to the light and air to expand and flower in another element. How interesting the bud's progress from the water to the air! So many of these stems are leaf-bearing, and so many, flower-bearing. Then consider how defended these plants against drought, at the bottom of the water, at most their leaves and flowers floating on its surface. How much mud and water are required to support their vitality! It is pleasant to remember those quiet Sabbath mornings by remote stagnant rivers and ponds where pure white water lilies just expanded, not yet infested by insects, float on the waveless water and perfume the atmosphere. Nature never appears more serene and innocent and fragrant. A hundred white lilies open to the sun rest on the surface smooth as oil amid their pads, while devil's needles are glancing over them. It requires some skill so to pull a lily as to get a long stem.

The great yellow lily, the spatterdock, expresses well the fertility of the river.

One flower on a spike of the *Pontederia cor data* just ready to expand.

Children bring you the early blueberry to sell now. It is considerably earlier on the tops of hills which have been recently cut off than in the plains or in vales. The girl that has Indian blood in her veins and picks berries for a living will find them out as soon as they turn.

The *Anemone virginiana*, tall anemone, looking like a white buttercup, on Egg Rock, cannot have been long in bloom.

I see the columbine lingering still.

June 29, 1859. I see two chestnut-sided warblers hopping and chipping a long time, as if they had a nest within six feet of me. No doubt they are breeding near. Yellow crown with a fine, dark, longitudinal line, reddish chestnut sides, black triangle on side of head. White beneath.

June 30, 1840. I sailed from Fair Haven last evening as gently and steadily as the clouds sail through the atmosphere. The wind came blowing blithely from the southwest fields, and stepped into the folds of our sails like a winged horse, pulling with a strong and steady impulse. The sail bends gently to the breeze as swells some generous impulse of the heart, and anon flutters and flaps with a kind of human suspense. I could watch the motions of a sail forever, they

are so rich and full of meaning. I watch the play of its pulse as if it were my own blood beating there. The varying temperature of different atmospheres is graduated on its scale. It is a free, buoyant creature, the bauble of the heavens and the earth. A gay pastime the air plays with it. If it swells and tugs, it is because the sun lays his windy finger on it. The breeze it plays with has been out doors so long, so thin is it, and yet so full of life, so noiseless when it labors hardest, so noisy and impatient when least serviceable. So am I blown by God's breath, so flutter and flap, and fill gently out with the breeze.

In this fresh evening, each blade and leaf looks as if it had been dipped in an icy liquid greenness. Let eyes that ache come here and look, the sight will be a sovereign eye-water, or else wait and bathe them in the dark.

We go forth into the fields, and there the wind blows freshly onward, and still on, and we must make new efforts not to be left behind. What does the dogged wind intend, that like a wilful cur it will not let me to turn aside to rest or content? Must it always reprove and provoke me, and never welcome me as an equal?

The truth shall prevail and falsehood discover itself as long as the wind blows on the hills.

A man's life should be a stately march to a

sweet but unheard music, and when to his fellows it shall seem irregular and inharmonious, he will only be stepping to a livelier measure, or his nicer ear hurry him into a thousand symphonies and concordant variations. There will be no halt ever, but at most a marching on his post, or such a pause as is richer than any sound, when the melody runs into such depth and wildness as to be no longer heard, but implicitly consented to with the whole life and being. He will take a false step never, even in the most arduous times, for the music will not fail to swell into greater sweetness and volume, and itself rule the movement it inspired.

Value and effort are as much coincident as weight and a tendency to fall. In a very wide but true sense, effort is the deed itself, and it is only when these sensible stuffs intervene, that our attention is distracted from the deed to the accident. It is never the deed men praise, but some marble or canvas which are only a staging to the real work.

June 30, 1851. Haying has commenced. I see the farmers in distant fields cocking their hay now at six o'clock. The day has been so oppressively warm, that some workmen have lain by at noon, and the haymakers are mowing now at early twilight. The blue flag, *Iris versicolor*, enlivens the meadow, and the lark sings there at

sundown afar off. It is a note which belongs to a New England summer evening. Though so late I hear the summer hum of a bee in the grass, as I am on my way to the river . . . to bathe. After hoeing in a dusty garden all this warm afternoon, so warm that the baker says he never knew the like, and expects to find his horses dead in the stable when he gets home, it is very grateful to wend one's way at evening to some pure and cool stream, and bathe therein. . . .

What I suppose is the *Aster miser*, small-flow-ered aster, like a small many-headed white-weed, has now for a week been in bloom, a humble weed, but one of the earliest of the asters.

I first observed about ten days ago that the fresh shoots of the fir-balsam, *Abies balsamifera*, found under the tree wilted, or plucked and kept in the pocket or in the house a few days, emit the fragrance of strawberries, only it is somewhat more aromatic and spicy. It was to me a very remarkable fragrance to be emitted by a pine, a very rich, delicious, aromatic, spicy fragrance, which, if the fresh and living shoots emitted, they would be still more to be sought after.

June 30, 1852. Nature must be viewed humanly to be viewed at all, that is, her scenes must be associated with humane affections, such as are associated with one's native place, for in-

stance. She is most significant to a lover. If I have no friend, what is Nature to me? She ceases to be morally significant. . . .

Is not this period more than any other distinguished for flowers when roses, swamp pinks, morning glories, arethusas, orchises, blue-flags, epilobiums, mountain laurel, and white lilies are all in blossom at once.

June 30, 1860. Try the temperature of the springs and pond. At 2.15 P. M., the atmosphere north of house is 83° above zero.

The same afternoon, the water of the boiling spring, 45° .

Our well, after pumping, 49° .

Brister's spring, 49° .

Walden Pond at bottom, in four feet of water, 71° .

River at one rod from shore, 77° .

(2 P. M., July 1, the air is 77° and the river 75° .)

I see that the temperature of the boiling spring, on the 6th of March, 1846, was also 45° , and I suspect it varies very little throughout the year.

In sand, both by day and night, you find the heat to be permanently greatest some three inches below the surface. It is so to-day, and this is about the depth at which the tortoises place their eggs, where the temperature is high.

est permanently and changes least between night and day.

Generally speaking, the fields are not im-browned yet, but the freshness of the year is preserved. As I stand on the side of Fair Haven Hill, the verdure generally appears at its height, the air clear, and the water sparkling after the rain of yesterday. It is a world of glossy leaves, and grassy fields and meads. The foliage of deciduous trees is now so nearly as dark as evergreens that I am not struck by the contrast. I think that the shadows under the edge of woods are less noticed now because the woods themselves are darker; so, too, with the darkness and shadows of elms.

Seen through this clear, sparkling, breezy air, the fields, woods, and meadows are very brilliant and fair. The leaves are now hard and glossy (the oldest), yet still comparatively fresh, and I do not see a single acre of grass that has been cut. The river meadows on each side the stream, looking toward the light, have an elysian beauty. . . . They are by far the most bright and sunny looking spots, such is the color of the sedges which grow there, while the pastures and hill-sides are dark green, and the grain fields glaucous green. It is remarkable that the meadows which are the lowest part should have the lightest, sunniest, yellowest look.

I hear scarcely any toads of late, except a few at evening. See in the garden, on the side of a corn-hill, the hole in which one sits by day. It is round, and about the width of his body across, extending one side underneath about the length of my little finger. It is shaped in the main like a turtle's nest, but not so broad beneath, and not quite so deep. There sits the toad in the shade and concealed completely under the ground, with its head toward the entrance, waiting for evening.

July 1, 1840. To be a man is to do a man's work. Always our resource is to endeavor. We may well say, Success to our endeavors. Effort is the prerogative of virtue.

The true laborer is recompensed by his labor not by his employer. Industry is its own wages. Let us not suffer our hands to lose one jot of their handiness by looking behind to a mere recompense, knowing that our true endeavor cannot be thwarted, nor we be cheated of our earnings unless by not earning them. Some symbol of value may shape itself to the senses in wood or marble or verse, but this is fluctuating as the laborer's hire, which may or may not be withheld. Perhaps the hugest and most effective deed may have no sensible result at all on earth, but paint itself in the heavens in new stars and constellations. Its very material lies out of Nature

When in rare moments we strive wholly with one consent, which we call a yearning, we may not hope that our work will stand in any artist's gallery.

July 1, 1852. 9.30 A. M. To Sherman's Bridge by land and water. One object, to see the white lilies in bloom. The *Trifolium arvense*, or rabbit's foot clover, is just beginning to show its color. . . . The mulleins generally now begin to show their pure yellow in roadside fields, and the white cymes of the elder are conspicuous on the edges of the copses. I perceive the meadow fragrance still. . . . Roses are in their prime now, growing amid huckleberry bushes, ferns, and sweet ferns, especially about some dry pond hole, some paler, some more red. It would seem they must have bloomed in vain while only wild men roamed, yet now they adorn only the pasture of these cows. — How well-behaved are cows! When they approach me reclining in the shade, from curiosity, or to receive a wisp of grass, or to share the shade, or to lick the dog held up, like a calf, though just now they ran at him to toss him, they do not obtrude; their company is acceptable, for they can endure the longest pause. They have not to be entertained. They occupy the most eligible lots in the town. I love to see some pure white about them. It suggests the more neatness.

Borrowed his boat of B——, the wheelwright, at the Corner bridge. He was quite ready to lend it, and took pains to shave down the handle of a paddle for me, conversing the while on the subject of spiritual knocking which he asked if I had looked into. Our conversation made him the slower. An obliging man who understands that I am abroad viewing the works of Nature and not loafing, though he makes the pursuit a semi-religious one, as are all more serious ones to most men. All that is not sporting in the field, as hunting and fishing, is of a religious or else love-cracked character.

The white lilies were in all their splendor, fully open, sometimes their lower petals lying flat on the surface. The largest appeared to grow in the shallower water, where some stood five or six inches out of water, and were five inches in diameter. Two which I examined had twenty-nine petals each. . . . Perhaps there was not one open which had not an insect in it, and most had some hundreds of small gnats. We shook them out, however, without much trouble, instead of drowning them out, which makes the petals close. The freshly opened lilies were a pearly white, and though the water amid the pads was quite unrippled, the passing air gave a slight oscillating, boatlike motion to and fro to the flowers, like boats held fast by their cables.

Some of the lilies had a beautiful rosaceous tinge, most conspicuous in the half-opened flower, extending through the calyx to the second row of petals, or those parts of the petals between the calyx leaves which were most exposed to the light. It seemed to be owing to the same coloring principle which is seen in the under-sides of the pads as well as in the calyx leaves. Yet the rosaceous ones are chiefly interesting to me for variety, and I am contented that lilies should be white, and leave these higher colors to the land. I wished to breathe the atmosphere of lilies, and get the full impression which they are fitted to make. The form of this flower is very perfect, the petals are so distinctly arranged at equal intervals and at all angles from nearly a vertical to horizontal about the centre. Buds that were half expanded were interesting, showing the regularly notched outline of the points of the petals above the erect green calyx leaves. Some of the bays we entered contained a quarter of an acre, through which we with difficulty forced our boat. First there is the low, smooth, green surface of the pads, some of the Kalmianas purplish, then the higher level of the pickerel weed just beginning to blossom, and rising a little higher in the rear, often extensive fields of pipes (*Equisetum*) making a very level appearance. Mingled with the white lilies were the large yellow ones, and

the smaller, and here at least much more common, *Nuphar lutea* (var. *Kalmiana*), and the floating heart also still in blossom, and the *Bra-senia peltata*, water target or shield, not yet in bloom, the petiole attached to its leaf, like a boy's string to his sucking leather. The rich violet purple of the pontederias was the more striking as the blossoms were still rare. Nature will soon be very lavish of this blue along the river sides. It is a rich spike of blue flowers with yellowish spots. Over all these flowers hover devil's needles in their zigzag flight. On the edge of the meadow I see blushing roses and cornels (probably the panicked). The woods ring with the veery this cloudy day, and I also hear the red-eye, oven-bird, Maryland yellow-throat, etc. — After eating our luncheon . . . we observed that every white lily in the river was shut, and they remained so all the afternoon (though it was no more sunny nor cloudy than the forenoon), except some which I had plucked before noon and cast into the river. These had not power to close their petals. It would be interesting to observe how instantaneously these lilies close at noon. I only noticed that though there were myriads fully open before I ate my luncheon at noon, after it, I could not find one open anywhere for the rest of the day. . . .

Counted twenty-one fishes' nests by the shal-

low shore just beyond Sherman's bridge, within less than half a rod, edge to edge, with each a bream poised in it. In some cases the fish had just cleared away the mud or frog spittle, exposing the yellow sand or pebbles (sixteen to twenty-four inches in diameter).

July 1, 1854. P. M. To Cliffs. . . . From the hill I perceive that the air is beautifully clear after the rain of yesterday, and not hot; fine grained. The landscape is fine as behind a glass, the horizon edge distinct. The distant vales toward the northwest mountains lie up open and clear and elysian, like so many Tempes. The shadows of trees are dark and distinct. On the river I see the two broad borders of pads reflecting the light, the dividing line between them and the water, their irregular edge, perfectly distinct. The clouds are separate glowing masses or blocks floating in the sky, not threatening rain. I see from this hill their great shadows pass slowly here and there over the top of the green forest.

July 1, 1859. P. M. To 2d Division Brook. . . . White water ranunculus in fresh bloom, at least a week, . . . in the shade of the bank, a clear day. Its leaves and stems waving in the brook are interesting, much cut and green.

July 2, 1840. I am not taken up, like Moses, upon a mountain, to learn the law, but lifted up

in my seat here in the warm sunshine and genial light.

Neither men nor things have any true mode of invitation but to be inviting. They who are ready to go are already invited.

Can that be a task which all things abet, and to postpone which is to strive against Nature?

July 2, 1851. It is a fresh, cool summer morning. From the road here, at N. Barrett's, at 8.30 A. M., the Great Meadows have a slight bluish, misty tinge in part, elsewhere a sort of hoary sheen, like a fine downiness, inconceivably fine and silvery far away, the light reflected from the grass blades, a sea of grass hoary with light, the counterpart of the frost in spring. As yet no mower has profaned it, scarcely a footstep since the waters left; miles of waving grass adorning the surface of the earth.

Last night, a sultry night which compelled one to leave all windows open, I heard two travelers talking aloud, was roused out of my sleep by their loud, day-like and somewhat unearthly discourse, at perchance one o'clock; from the country, whiling away the night with loud discourse. I heard the words Theodore Parker and Wendell Phillips loudly spoken, and so did half a dozen of my neighbors who also were awakened. Such is fame. It affected me like Dante talking of the men of this world in the infernal

regions. If the travelers had called my own name, I should equally have thought it an unearthly personage which it would have taken me some hours into daylight to realize. O traveler, have not you got any further than that? My genius hinted before I fairly awoke, "Improve your time." What is the night that a traveler's voice should sound so hollow in it? that a man, speaking aloud in it, speaking in the regions under the earth, should utter the words Theodore Parker?

A traveler! I love his title. A traveler is to be revered as such. His profession is the best symbol of our life. Going from — toward —; it is the history of every one of us. I am interested in those that travel in the night.

It takes but little distance to make the hills and even the meadows look blue to-day. That principle which gives the air an azure color is more abundant.

To-day the milk-weed is blossoming. Some of the raspberries are ripe, the most innocent and simple of fruits, the purest and most ethereal. Cherries, too, are ripe.

Many large trees, especially elms, about a house, are a sure indication of old family distinction and worth. . . . Any evidence of care bestowed on these trees receives the traveler's

respect as for a nobler husbandry than the raising of corn and potatoes.

July 2, 1852. . . . Last night, as I lay awake, I dreamed of the muddy and weedy river on which I had been paddling, and I seemed to derive some vigor from my day's experience, like the lilies which have their roots at the bottom.

I plucked a white lily bud just ready to expand, and after keeping it in water for two days (till July 3d), as I set about opening it, touching the lapped points of its petals, they sprang open and rapidly expanded in my hand into a perfect blossom with the petals as perfectly disposed at equal intervals as on their native lake, and in this case, of course, untouched by an insect. I cut its stem short and placed it in a broad dish of water, where it sailed about under the breath of the beholder with a slight undulatory motion. The breeze of his half-suppressed admiration it was that filled its sail, a kind of popular aura that may be trusted, methinks. It was a rose-tinted one. Men will travel to the Nile to see the lotus flower, who have never seen in their glory the lotuses of their native streams.

The spikes of the pale lobelia, some blue, some white, passing insensibly from one to the other, and especially hard to distinguish in the twilight, are quite handsome now in moist ground, rising above the grass. The prunella has various tints

in various lights, now blue, now lilac. As the twilight deepens into night, its color changes. It always suggests freshness and coolness from the places where it grows. I see the downy heads of the senecio gone to seed, thistle-like, but small. The gnaphaliums and this are among the earliest to present this appearance. . . .

At the bathing-place there is a hummock which was floated on to the meadow some springs ago, now densely covered with the handsome red-stemmed wild rose, — a full but irregular clump, showing no bare stems below, but a dense mass of shining leaves, and small, red stems above in their midst, and on every side countless roses ; now in the twilight more than usually beautiful they appear, hardly closed, of a very deep rich color, as if the rays of the departed sun still shone through them ; a more spiritual rose at this hour, beautifully blushing ; and then the unspeakable beauty and promise of those fair swollen buds that spot the mass and will blossom to-morrow, and the more distant promise of the handsomely formed green ones which yet show no red ; for few things are handsomer than a rose-bud in any stage. These are mingled with a few pure white elder blossoms and some rosaceous or pinkish meadow-sweet. I am confident that there can be nothing so beautiful in any cultivated garden with all its varieties as this wild clump. . . .

Nature is reported not by him who goes forth consciously as an observer, but in the fullness of life. To such a one she rushes to make her report. To the full heart she is all but a figure of speech. This is my year of observation, and I fancy that my friends are also more devoted to outward observation than ever before, as if it were an epidemic.

I cross the brook by Hubbard's little bridge. Now nothing but the cool, invigorating scent which is perceived at night in these low meadowy places where the alders and ferns grow can restore my spirits. . . .

At this season I think we do not regard the larger features of the landscape as in the spring, but are absorbed in details. Then, when the meadows were flooded, I looked far over them to the distant woods and the outlines of the hills which were more distinct. I should not have so much to say of extensive water or landscapes at this season. One is a little bewildered by the variety of objects. There must be a certain meagreness of details and nakedness, for wide views.

Nine o'clock. The full moon rising (or full last night) is revealed first by some slight clouds above the eastern horizon looking white, the first indication that she is about to rise, the traces of day not yet gone in the west. There, similar

clouds seen against a lighter sky look dark and heavy. Now a lower cloud in the east reflects a more yellowish light. The moon, far over the round globe, traveling this way, sends her light forward to yonder cloud from which the news of her coming is reflected to us. The moon's aurora! it is without redness . . . like the dawn of philosophy and its noon, too. At her dawning no cocks crow. How few creatures to hail her rising, only some belated travelers that may be abroad this night. What graduated information of her coming! More and more yellow glows the low cloud with concentrating light, and now the moon's edge suddenly appears above a low bank of cloud not seen before, and she seems to come forward apace without introduction, after all. The steadiness with which she rises with undisturbed serenity, like a queen who has learned to walk before her court, is glorious, and she soon reaches the open sea of the heavens. She seems to advance (so perchance flows the blood in the veins of the beholder) by graceful, sallying essays, trailing her garment up the sky.

July 2, 1854. 4 A. M. To Hill. Hear the chip-bird and robin very lively at dawn. From the hill, as the sun rises, I see a fine river-fog wreathing the trees, elms and maples, by the shore. . . . It is clear summer now. The cocks

crow hoarsely, ushering in the long-drawn, thirsty summer day.

P. M. An abundance of red lilies in an upland dry meadow, from one to two feet high, upright-flowered, more or less dark shade of red, freckled and sometimes wrinkle-edged petals. Must have been out some days. This has come with the intense summer heat, a torrid July heat. . . . The spring now seems far behind, yet I do not remember the interval; I feel as if some broad, invisible, Lethæan gulf lay between this and spring.

July 2, 1855. Young bobolinks are now fluttering over the meadow, but I have not been able to find a nest, so concealed are they in the meadow grass.

At 2 P. M. Thermometer north side of house, 93°.

Air over river at Hubbard's bathing-place, 88°.

Water six feet from shore and one foot deep, 84½°.

Water near surface in middle when up to neck, 83½°.

Water at bottom in same place, pulling [thermometer] up quickly, 83½°.

Yet the air on the wet body, there being a strong southwest wind, feels colder than the water.

July 2, 1857. *Calla palustris* with its convolute point, like the cultivated, at the south end of Gowing's swamp. Having found this in one place, I now find it in another. Many an object is not seen, though it falls within the range of our visual ray, because it does not come within the range of our intellectual ray. So in the largest sense we find only the world we look for.

July 2, 1860. Yesterday I detected the smallest grass that I know, apparently *Festuca tenella*? It seemed to be out of bloom. In a dry path, two to four inches high, like a moss.

July 2, 1858. A. M. Start for the White Mountains in a private carriage with E—— H——. Spent the noon close by the old Dunstable graveyard, by a small stream north of it. . . . Walked to and along the river, and bathed in it. . . . What a relief and expansion of my thoughts when I came out from that inland position by the graveyard to this broad river's shore. This vista was incredible there. Suddenly I see a broad reach of blue beneath, with its curves and headlands, liberating me from the more terrene earth. What a difference it makes whether I spend my four hours nooning between the hills by yonder roadside, or on the brink of this fair river, within a quarter of a mile of that! Here the earth is fluid to my thought, the sky is reflected from beneath, and around yonder cape is

the highway to other continents. This current allies me with the world. Be careful to sit in an elevating and inspiring place. There my thoughts were confined and trivial, and I hid myself from the gaze of travelers. Here they are expanded and elevated, and I am charmed by the beautiful river reach. It is equal to a different season and country, and creates a different mood. . . . This channel conducts our thoughts as well as our bodies to classic and famous ports, and allies us to all that is fair and great. I like to remember that at the end of half a day's walk I can stand on the bank of the Merrimack. It is just wide enough to interrupt the land, and leads my eye and thought down its channel to the sea. A river is superior to a lake in its liberating influence. It has motion and indefinite length. A river touching the back of a town is like a wing, unused it may be as yet, but ready to waft it over the world. With its rapid current, it is a slightly fluttering wing. . . .

The wood-thrush sings almost wherever I go, eternally recommending the world morning and evening for us. Again it seems habitable and more than habitable to us.

July 4, 1858. . . . It is far more independent to travel on foot, you have to sacrifice so much to the horse. You cannot choose the most agree-

able places in which to spend the noon, commanding the finest views, because commonly there is no water there, or you cannot get there with your horse. New Hampshire being a more hilly and newer State than Massachusetts, it is very difficult to find a suitable place to camp in near the road, affording water, a good prospect, and retirement. Several times we rode on, as much as ten miles, with a tired horse, looking in vain for such a place, and then almost invariably camped in some low and unpleasant spot. There are very few, scarcely any, lanes, or even paths and bars along the road. As we are beyond the range of the chestnut, the few bars that might be taken down are long and heavy planks or slabs intended to confine sheep, and there is no passable road behind. Besides, when you have chosen your place, one must stay behind to watch your effects, while the other looks about. I frequently envied the independence of the walker who can spend the midday hours and take his lunch in the most agreeable spot on his route. The only alternative is to spend your noon at some trivial inn, pestered by flies and tavern loungers.

Camped within a mile south of Senter Harbor, in a birch wood on the right, near the lake. Heard in the night a loon, screech-owl, and cuckoo; and our horse, tied to a slender birch

close by, restlessly pawing the ground all night, and whinnying to us whenever we showed ourselves, asking for something more than meal to fill his belly with.

July 5, 1858. Go on through Senter Harbor, and ascend Red Hill in Moultonboro. Dr. Jackson says it is so called from the *Uva ursi* on it turning red in the fall. On the top we boil a dipper of tea for our dinner, spend some hours, having carried up water for the last half mile. Enjoyed the famous view of Winnepiseogee and its islands south-easterly, and Squam Lake on the west, but I was as much attracted at this hour by the wild mountain view on the northward. Chocorua and the Sandwich Mountains a dozen miles off seemed the boundary of cultivation on that side, as indeed they are. They are, as it were, the impassable southern barrier of the mountain region, themselves lofty and bare, and filling the whole northerly horizon, with the broad valley of Sandwich between you and them. Over their ridges, in one or two places, you detect a narrow blue edging or a peak of the loftier White Mountains, strictly so called. . . . Chocorua (which the inhabitants pronounce Shecorway, or Corway) is in some respects the wildest and most imposing of all the White Mountain peaks. . . . Descended and rode along the west and northwest side of Ossi-

pee Mountain. Sandwich, in a large, level space surrounded by mountains, lay on our left. Here first in Moultonboro I heard the *tea-lee* of the white-throated sparrow. We were all the afternoon riding along under Ossipee Mountain, which would not be left behind, unexpectedly large, still lowering over our path. Have new and memorable views of Chocorua as we get round it eastward. Stop at Tamworth village for the night. We are now near the edge of a wild and unsettleable mountain region lying northwest, apparently including parts of Albany and Waterville. The landlord said that bears were plenty in it, that there was a little interval on Swift River that might be occupied, and that was all.

July 6, 1858. 5.30 A. M. Keep on through North Tamworth, and breakfast by shore of one of the Ossipee Lakes. Chocorua north-northwest. Hear and see loons. . . . Chocorua is as interesting a peak as any to remember. You may be jogging along steadily for a day before you get round it and leave it behind, first seeing it on the north, then northwest, then west, and at last southwesterly, ever stern, rugged, [apparently] inaccessible, and omnipresent. . . . The scenery in Conway and onward to North Conway is surprisingly grand. You are steadily advancing into an amphitheatre of mountains. I do

not know exactly how long we had seen one of the highest peaks before us in the extreme northwest, with snow on its side just below the summit, when a boy, a little beyond Conway, called it Mount Washington. If it were that, the snow must have been in Tuckerman's Ravine, which, methinks, is rather too low. Perhaps it was that we afterwards saw on Mount Adams. . . . The road, which is for the most part level, winds along the Saco through groves of maples, etc., on the intervals, with little of rugged New Hampshire under your feet, often a soft and sandy road. The scenery is remarkable for this contrast of level interval having soft and shady groves with mountain grandeur and ruggedness. Often from the midst of level maple groves which remind you only of classic lowlands, you look out through a vista of the most rugged scenery of New England. It is quite unlike New Hampshire generally, quite unexpected by me, and suggests a superior culture. . . . After leaving North Conway, the higher White Mountains were less seen, if at all. They had not appeared in pinnacles as sometimes described, but broad and massive. Only one of the higher summits, called by the boy Mount Washington, was conspicuous. . . . At Bartlett Corner we turned up the Ellis River and took our nooning on its bank, by the bridge just this side of Jackson Centre,

in a rock-maple grove. . . . There are but few narrow intervals on the road, two or three only after passing Jackson, and each is improved by a settler. . . . Hear the night-warbler all along thus far. Saw the bones of a bear at the house [of one Wentworth, afterwards their attendant] and camped rather late, on right-hand side of road just beyond, a little more than four miles from Jackson. . . . Heard at evening the wood-thrush, veery, white-throated sparrow, etc. . . . Wentworth said he was much troubled by the bears. They killed his sheep and calves, and destroyed his corn when in the milk, close by his house. He has trapped and killed many of them, and brought home and reared the young.

July 7, 1858. Having engaged the services of Wentworth to carry up some of our baggage, and to keep our camp, we rode onward to the Glen House, eight miles further, sending back our horse and wagon to his house. He has lived here thirty years, and is a native. . . . Began the ascent of the mountain road at 11.30 A. M. Near the foot of the ledge and limit of trees, only their dead trunks standing, probably fir and spruce, a merry collier and his assistant, who had been making coal for the summit, and were preparing to leave the next morning, made us welcome to their shanty, where we spent the night, and entertained us with their talk. We here

boiled some of our beef tongues, a very strong wind pouring in gusts down the funnel, and scattering the fire about through the cracked stove. This man . . . had imported goats on to the mountain, and milked them to supply us with milk for our coffee. . . . The wind blowing down the funnel set fire to a pile of dirty bed-quilts while I was out, and came near burning up the building. There were many barrels of spoiled beef in the cellar, and the collier said that a person coming down the mountain, some time ago, looked into the cellar and saw five wild cats (*loups cerviers*) there. He had heard two fighting like cats near by a few nights before.

July 8, 1858. Though a fair day, the sun did not rise clear. I started before my companions, wishing to secure a clear view from the summit, while they accompanied the collier, who, with his assistant, was conducting his goats up to the summit for the first time. He led the old one, and the rest followed.

I reached the summit about half an hour before my party, and enjoyed a good view, though it was hazy. By the time the rest arrived, a cloud invested us all, a cool, driving mist, which wet one considerably. As I looked downward over the rocky surface I saw tinges of blue sky and a light as of breaking away close to the rocky edge of the mountain, far

below me, instead of above, showing that there was the edge of the cloud. It was surprising to look down thus under the cloud, at an angle of thirty or forty degrees, for the only evidences of a clear sky and breaking away. There was a ring of light encircling the summit thus close to the rocks under the thick cloud, and the evidences of a blue sky in that direction were just as strong as ordinarily when you look upward. . . .

I observed that the enduring snow-drifts were such as had lodged under the southeast cliffs, having been blown over the summit by the northwest wind. They lie up under such cliffs, and at the head of the ravines on the southeast slopes. . . .

About 8.15 A. M., being still in a dense fog, we started direct for Tuckerman's Ravine, I having taken the bearing of it before the fog, but Spaulding [one of "the landlords of the Tip-Top and Summit Houses"], also went some ten rods with us, and pointed toward the head of the Ravine, which was about S. 15° W. . . . The landlords were rather anxious about us. I looked at my compass every four or five rods, and then walked toward some rock in our course, but frequently, after taking three or four steps, though the fog was no more dense, I would lose the rock I steered for. The fog was very

bewildering. You would think the rock you steered for was some large boulder twenty rods off, or perchance it looked like the brow of a distant spur, but a dozen steps would take you to it, and it would suddenly have sunk into the ground. Discovering this illusion, I said to my companions, "You see that boulder of a peculiar form, slanting over another. Well, that is in our course. How large do you think it is? and how far?" To my surprise, one answered, three rods, but the other said nine. I guessed four, and we all thought it about eight feet high. We could not see beyond it, and it looked like the highest point of a ridge before us. At the end of twenty-one paces, or three and a half rods, I stepped upon it less than two feet high, and I could not have distinguished it from the hundred similar ones around it, if I had not kept my eye on it all the while. It is unwise for one to ramble over these mountains at any time, unless he is prepared to move with as much certainty as if he were solving a geometrical problem. A cloud may at any moment settle around him, and unless he has a compass and knows which way to go, he will be lost at once. One lost on the summit of these mountains should remember that if he will travel due east or west eight or nine miles, or commonly much less, he will strike a public road; or whatever direction he might

take, the average distance would not be more than eight miles, and the extreme distance twenty. Follow some watercourse running easterly or westerly. If the weather were severe on the summit, so as to prevent searching for the summit houses or the path, I should at once take a westward course from the southern part of the range, and an eastward one from the northern part. To travel then with security, a person must know his bearings at every step, be it fair weather or foul. An ordinary rock in a fog, being in the apparent horizon, is exaggerated to perhaps ten times its size and distance. You will think you have gone further than you have, to get to it. Descending straight by compass through the cloud toward the head of Tuckerman's Ravine, we found it an easy descent over, for the most part, bare rocks, not very large, with at length moist, springy places, green with sedge, etc., between little sloping shelves of green meadow, where the hellebore grew within half a mile of the top, and the *Oldenlandia cœrulea* was abundantly out, very large and fresh, surpassing ours in the spring. . . . We crossed a narrow portion of the snow, but found it unexpectedly hard and dangerous to traverse. I tore up my nails in efforts to save myself from sliding down its steep surface. The snow field now formed an irregular crescent on the steep

slope at the head of the ravine, some sixty rods wide horizontally, or from north to south, and twenty-five rods wide from upper to lower side. It may have been a half dozen feet thick in some places, but it diminished sensibly in the rain while we were there; said to be all gone commonly by the end of August. The surface was hard, difficult to work your heels into, a perfectly regular steep slope, steeper than an ordinary roof from top to bottom. A considerable stream, a source of the Saco, was flowing out from beneath it, where it had worn a low arch a rod or more wide. Here were the phenomena of winter and earliest spring contrasted with summer. On the edge of and beneath the over-arching snow, many plants were just pushing up as in spring. The great plaited elliptical buds of the hellebore had just pushed up there, even under the edge of the snow, and also bluets. Also, close to the edge of the snow, the bare, upright twigs of a willow, with small, silvery buds, not yet expanded, of a satiny lustre, one to two feet high (apparently *Salix repens*), but not, as I noticed, procumbent, while a rod off, on each side, where it had been melted some time, it was going to seed, and fully leaved out. Saw also what was apparently the *Salix phylicifolia*. The surface of the snow was dirty, being covered with cinder-like rubbish of vegetation which

had blown on to it. Yet from the camp it looked quite white and pure. For thirty or forty rods, at least, down the stream, you could see the print where the snow-field had recently melted. It was a dirty brown flattened stubble, not yet at all greened, covered with a blackish, shining dirt, the dust of the snow-crust. Looking closely I saw that it was composed, in great part, of golden-rods (if not asters), now quite flattened, with other plants. I should have said that from the edge of the ravine, having reached the lower edge of the cloud, we came out into the sun again, much to our satisfaction, and discerned a little lake called Hermit Lake, about a mile off, at the bottom of the ravine, just within the limit of the trees. For this we steered, in order to camp by it, for the sake of the protection of the wood. But following down the edge of the stream, the source of Ellis River, which was quite a brook within a stone's throw of its head, we soon found it very bad walking in the scrubby fir and spruce, and therefore, when we had gone about two thirds of the way to the lake, decided to camp in the midst of the dwarf firs, clearing away a space with our hatchet. Having cleared a space with some difficulty where the trees were seven or eight feet high, Wentworth kindled a fire on the lee side, without, against my advice, removing the moss, which was especially dry on

the rocks, and directly ignited and set fire to the fir leaves, spreading off with great violence and crackling over the mountain, and making us jump for our baggage. Fortunately, it did not burn a foot toward us, for we could not have run in that thicket. It spread particularly fast in the procumbent creeping spruce, scarcely a foot deep, and made a few acres of deers' horns, thus leaving our mark on the mountain side. We thought at first it would run for miles, and Wentworth said it would do no harm, — the more there was burned the better ; but such was the direction of the wind that it soon reached the brow of a ridge east of us, and then burned very slowly down its east side. Yet Willey says, p. 23 [of his "Incidents of White Mountain History"], speaking of the dead trees, "bucks' horns," "Fire could not have caused the death of these trees ; for fire will not spread here in consequence of the humidity of the whole region at this elevation," and he attributes their death to the cold of 1816. Yet fire did spread above the limit of trees in this ravine. — Finally, we kept on, leaving the fire raging, down to the first little lake, walking in the stream, jumping from rock to rock with it. It may have fallen a thousand feet, within a mile below the snow. We camped on a slightly rising ground between that first little lake and the stream, in a dense

fir and spruce wood, thirty feet high, though it was but the limit of trees there. On our way we found the *Arnica mollis* (recently begun to bloom), a very fragrant yellow-rayed flower by the side of the brook, also half way up the ravine. The *Alnus viridis* was a prevailing shrub all along this stream, seven or eight feet high near our camp. Near the snow it was dwarfish, and still in flower, but in fruit only below ; had a glossy, roundish, wrinkled, green, sticky leaf. Also a little *Ranunculus abortivus* by the brook, in bloom. . . . Our camp was opposite a great slide on the south, apparently a quarter of a mile wide, with the stream between us and it, and I resolved, if a great storm should occur, that we would flee to higher ground north-east. The little pond by our side was perfectly clear and cool, without weeds, and the meadow by it was dry enough to sit down in. When I looked up casually toward the crescent of snow, I would mistake it for the sky, a white glowing sky or cloud, it was so high, while the dark earth or mountain side above it passed for a dark cloud.

In the course of the afternoon, we heard, as we thought, a faint shout, and it occurred to me that B——, for whom I had left a note at the Glen House, might possibly be looking for me, but soon Wentworth decided that it must be a

bear, for they make a noise like a woman in distress. He has caught many of them. Nevertheless we shouted in return, and waved a light coat on the meadow. After an hour or two had elapsed, we heard the voice again nearer, and saw two men. I went up the stream to meet B—— and B——, wet, ragged, and bloody from black flies. I had told B—— to look out for a smoke and a white tent. We had made a smoke sure enough. They were on the edge of the ravine when they shouted, and heard us answer, about a mile distant, over all the roar of the stream. They also saw our coat waved and ourselves. We slept five in the tent that night, and found it quite warm. It rained in the night, putting out the fire we had set. The wood-thrush, which Wentworth called the nightingale, sang at evening and in the morning, and the same bird which I heard on Monadnock, I think, and then thought might be the Blackburnian warbler; also the veery.

July 9, 1858. Walked to Hermit Lake some forty rods northeast. It was clear and cold, with scarcely a plant in it, of perhaps half an acre. H—— tried in vain for trout here. From a low ridge east of it was a fine view of the ravine. Heard a bull-frog in the lake, and afterwards saw a large toad part way up the ravine. Our camp was about on the limit of trees, and may have

been from twenty-five hundred to three thousand feet below the summit. I was here surprised to discover, looking down through the fir-tops, a large, bright, downy, fair weather cloud, covering the lower world far beneath us, and there it was the greater part of the time we were there, like a lake, while the snow and alpine summit were to be seen above us on the other side at about the same angle. The pure white crescent of snow was our sky, and the dark mountain side above, our permanent cloud. — We had the *Fringilla hiemalis* with its usual note about our camp. Wentworth said it was common, and bred about his house. I afterwards saw it in the valleys about the mountains. I had seen the white-throated sparrow near his house. This also, he said, commonly bred there on the ground. — The wood we were in was fir and spruce. Along the brook grew the *Alnus viridis*, *Salix Torreyana* (?), canoe birch, red cherry, mountain ash, etc. . . . I ascended the stream in the afternoon and got out of the ravine at its head, after dining on chiogenes tea, which plant I could gather without moving from my log seat. We liked it so well that B—— gathered a parcel to carry home. In most places it was scarcely practicable to get out of the ravine on either side on account of the precipices. I judged it to be one thousand or fifteen hundred feet deep. With care you could

ascend by some slides. I found we might have camped in the scrub firs above the edge of the ravine, though it would have been cold and windy and comparatively unpleasant there, for we should have been most of the time in a cloud. The dense patches of dwarf fir and spruce scarcely rose above the rocks which they concealed. At a glance, looking over, or even walking over this dense shrubbery, you would think it nowhere more than a foot or two deep, and the trees at most only an inch or two in diameter, but by searching you would find hollow places in it six or eight feet deep, where the firs were from six to ten inches in diameter. By clearing a space here with your hatchet you could find a shelter for your tent, and also fuel, and water was close by above the head of the ravine. The strong wind and the snow are said to flatten these trees down thus. I noticed that this shrubbery just above the ravine as well as in it was principally fir, while the yet more dwarfish and prostrate portion on the edge was spruce.

Returning I sprained my ankle in jumping down the brook, so that I could not sleep that night, nor walk the next day. — We had commonly clouds above and below us, though it was clear where we were. They commonly reached about down to the edge of the ravine. — The

black flies which pestered us till into evening were of various sizes, the largest more than one eighth of an inch long. There were scarcely any mosquitoes, it was so cool.

A small owl came in the evening and sat within twelve feet of us, turning its head this way and that, and peering at us inquisitively.

July 10, 1858. . . . When I tasted the water under the snow arch . . . I was disappointed at its warmth, though it was in part melted snow, but half a mile lower down it tasted colder. Probably the air being cooled by the neighborhood of the snow, it seemed thus warmer by contrast. . . . The most peculiar and memorable songster was the one with a note like that I heard on Monadnock, keeping up an exceedingly brisk and lively strain. It was remarkable for its incessant twittering flow. Yet we never got sight of the bird, at least while singing, so that I could not identify it, and my lameness prevented my pursuing it. I heard it afterwards even in the Franconia Notch. It was surprising from its steady, uninterrupted flow, for, when one stopped, another appeared to take up the strain. It reminded me of a fine corkscrew stream issuing with incessant tinkle from a cork, flowing rapidly, and I said he had pulled out the spile and left it running. That was the rhythm, but with a sharper tinkle of course. It had no more variety

than that, and was more remarkable for its continuance and monotony than any other bird's note I ever heard. It evidently belongs only to cool mountain sides high up amid the fir and spruce. I saw ever flitting through the fir tops restlessly a small white and dark bird, sylvia-like, which may have been it. Sometimes they appeared to be attracted by our smoke. The note was so incessant that at length you only noticed when it ceased.

The black flies were of various sizes, much larger than I noticed in Maine. They compelled me most of the time to sit in the smoke, which I preferred to wearing a veil. They lie along your forehead in a line where your hat touches it, or behind your ears, or about your throat if not protected by a beard, or get into the rims of the eyes or between the fingers, and there suck till they are crushed. But fortunately they do not last far into the evening, and a wind or a fog disperses them. I did not mind them much, but I noticed that men working on the highway made a fire to keep them off. Anything but mosquitoes by night. I find many black flies accidentally pressed in my botany and plant books. A botanist's books, if he has ever visited the primitive northern woods, will be pretty sure to contain such specimens.

H—— found, near the edge of the ravine

above, *Rhododendron lapponicum*, some time out of bloom, in the midst of *empetrum* and moss, according to Durand, at 68° in Greenland, *Arctostaphylos alpina* going to seed, *Polygonum viviparum*, in prime according to Durand, at all Kane's stations, and *Salix herbacea*, according to Durand, at 73° in Greenland, a pretty, trailing, roundish-leaved willow going to seed, but apparently not as early as the *Salix uva ursi*.

July 11, 1858. . . . One of the slender spruce trees by our camp, which we cut down, twenty-eight feet high, and only six and a half inches in diameter, though it looked young and thrifty, had about 80 rings, and the firs were at least as old. . . .

After some observation I concluded that it was true, as Wentworth had intimated, that the lower limbs of the spruce slanted downward more generally than those of the fir.

July 12, 1858. It having cleared up, we shouldered our packs and commenced our descent by a path two and a half or three miles to carriage road, not descending a great deal. . . . Trees at first fir and spruce, then canoe birches increased, and, after two miles, yellow birch began.

I had noticed that the trees of the ravine camp, fir and spruce, did not stand firmly. Two

or three of us could have pulled down one thirty feet high and six or seven inches thick. They were easily rocked, lifting their horizontal roots each time, which reminded me of what is said about the Indians, that they sometimes bend over a young tree, burying a chief under its roots and letting it spring back, for his monument and protection. — In the afternoon, we rode along, three of us, northward and northwestward on our way round the mountains, going through Gorham. We camped one and a half miles west of Gorham by the roadside on the bank of Moose River.

July 13, 1858. This morning it rained, keeping us in camp till near noon, for we did not wish to lose the view of the mountains as we rode along. . . .

I noticed, as we were on our way in the afternoon, that when finally it began to rain hard, the clouds settling down, we had our first distinct view of the mountain outline for a short time. . . . It rained steadily and soakingly the rest of the afternoon as we kept on through Randolph and Kilkenny to Jefferson Hill, so that we had no clear view of the mountains. We put up at a store just opposite the town hall on Jefferson Hill. It cleared up at sunset after two days' rain, and we had a fine view, repaying us for our journey and wetting. . . . After the

sun set to us, the bare summits were of a delicate rosaceous color, passing through violet into the deep dark-blue or purple of the night, which already invested the lower parts. This night-shadow was wonderfully blue, reminding me of the blue shadows on snow. There was an after-glow in which these tints and variations were repeated. It was the grandest mountain view I ever got. In the meanwhile, white clouds were gathering again about the summits, first about the highest, appearing to form there, but sometimes to send off an emissary to initiate a cloud upon a lower neighboring peak. You could tell little about the comparative distance of a cloud and a peak till you saw that the former actually impinged on the latter.

July 14, 1858. This forenoon we rode on through Whitefield to Bethlehem, clouds for the most part concealing the higher mountains. . . . Camped half a mile up the side of Lafayette.

July 15. Continued the ascent of Lafayette. It is perhaps three and a half miles from the road to the top by path along a winding ridge. . . . At about one mile or three quarters below the summit, just above the limit of trees, we came to a little pond, may be of a quarter of an acre (with a yet smaller one near by), one of the sources of the Pemigewasset. . . . The cut-

let of this pond was considerable, but soon lost beneath the rocks.

In the dwarf fir thickets above and below this pond were the most beautiful linnæas I ever saw. They grew quite densely, full of rose purple flowers (deeper reddish-purple than ours, which are pale), perhaps nodding over the brink of a spring. Altogether the finest mountain flowers I saw, lining the side of the narrow horse track through the fir scrub. Just below the top, reclined on a dense bed of *Salix Uva-ursi*, five feet in diameter by four or five inches deep, a good spot to sit on, mixed with a rush, amid rocks. This willow was generally showing its down. — We had fine weather on the mountain, and from the summit a good view of Mount Washington and the rest, though it was a little hazy in the horizon. It was a wild mountain and forest scene from south-southeast round eastwardly to north-northeast. On the north-west and down as far as Monadnock, the country was half cleared, the “leopard”-spotted land.

Boiled tea for our dinner by the little pond, the head of the Pemigewasset. . . . We made our fire on the moss and lichens by a rock amid the shallow fir and spruce, burning the dead fir twigs, or “deer’s horns.” I cut off a flourishing fir three feet high and not flattened at the top yet. This was one and a quarter inches in di-

ameter, and had thirty-four rings. Another flourishing one fifteen inches high had twelve rings at ground. . . . Another, three feet high, fresh and vigorous, without a flat top as yet, had its woody part one and an eighth inches in diameter, the bark being one eighth inch thick, and sixty-one rings. There were no signs of decay, though it was, as usual, mossy or covered with lichens. . . .

When half way down the mountain amid the spruce, we saw two pine grossbeaks, male and female, and looked for a nest, but in vain. They were remarkably tame. . . . The male flew near inquisitively, uttering a low twitter, and perched fearlessly within four feet of us, eyeing us and pluming himself, and plucking and eating the leaves of the *Amelanchier oligocarpa* on which he sat for several minutes. The female, meantime, was a rod off. They were evidently breeding there, yet neither Wilson nor Nuttall speak of their breeding in the United States.

At the base of the mountain over the road heard singing, and saw at the same place where I heard him the evening before, a splendid rose-breasted grossbeak. I had before mistaken him at first for a tanager, then for a red-eye, but was not satisfied. Now with my glass I distinguished him sitting quite still high above the road at the entrance of the mountain path, in the deep

woods, and singing steadily for twenty minutes. Its note was much more powerful than that of the tanager or red-eye. It had not the hoarseness of the tanager's, and more sweetness and fullness than that of the red-eye. . . . Rode on and stopped at Morrison's (once Tilton's) Inn in West Thornton.

July 16, 1858. Continue on through Thornton and Campton. The butternut is first noticed in these towns, a common tree.

About the mountains were wilder and rarer birds, more or less arctic, like the vegetation. I did not even *hear* the robin in them, and when I had left them a few miles behind, it was a great change and surprise to hear the lark, the wood-pewee, the robin, and the bobolink (for the last had not done singing). On the mountains, especially at Tuckerman's Ravine, the notes of even familiar birds sounded strange to me. I hardly knew the wood-thrush and veery and oven-bird at first. They sing differently there. . . . We were not troubled at all by black flies after leaving the Franconia Notch. It is only apparently in primitive woods that they work.

Saw chestnuts first and frequently in Franklin and Boscawen, about $43\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ north, or half a degree higher than Emerson puts it. . . . Of oaks I saw and heard only of the red in northern New Hampshire. The witch-hazel was very abundant

and large there and about the mountains. Lodged at tavern in Franklin, west side of river.

July 17, 1858. Passed by Webster's place, three miles this side of the village; some half dozen houses there, no store, nor public buildings. Very quiet; road lined with elms and maples. Railroad between house and barn. The farm apparently a level and rather sandy interval. Nothing particularly attractive about it. A plain, public grave-yard within its limits. Saw the grave of Ebenezer Webster, Esq., who died 1806, aged sixty-seven, and of Abigail, his wife, who died 1816, aged seventy-six, probably Webster's father and mother. . . . Webster was born two or more miles northwest, house now gone. . . . Reached Weare, and put up at a quiet and agreeable house, without any sign or bar-room. Many Friends in this town. Pillsbury and Rogers known here. The former lived in Henniker, the next town.

July 18, 1858. Keep on through New Boston, etc., to Hollis, . . . and at evening to Pepperell. A marked difference when we enter Massachusetts in roads, farms, houses, trees, fences, etc.; a great improvement, showing an older settled country. In New Hampshire there is a great want of shade trees; the roads bleak or sunny, from which there is no escape. What

barbarians we are! The convenience of the traveler is very little consulted. He merely has the privilege of crossing somebody's farm by a particular narrow and may be unpleasant path. The individual retains all the rights as to trees, fruit, wash of the road, etc. On the other hand, these should belong to mankind inalienably. The road should be of ample width and adorned with trees expressly for the use of the traveler. There should be broad recesses in it, especially at springs and watering-places, where he can turn out, and rest or camp, if he will. I feel commonly as if I were condemned to drive through somebody's cow-yard or huckleberry pasture by a narrow lane, and if I make a fire by the roadside to boil my hasty pudding, the farmer comes running over to see if I am not burning up his stuff.

July 19, 1858. Got home at noon. . . . We might easily have built us a shed of spruce bark at the foot of Tuckerman's Ravine. I thought that I might in a few moments strip off the bark of a spruce a little bigger than myself and seven feet long, letting it curl, as it naturally would, then crawl into it and be protected from any rain. Wentworth said that he had sometimes stripped off birch bark two feet wide, and put his head through a slit in the middle, letting the ends fall down before and behind as he walked.

—The slides in Tuckerman's Ravine appeared to be a series of deep gullies side by side, where sometimes it appeared as if a very large rock had slid down without turning over, plowing this deep furrow all the way, only a few rods wide. Some of the slides were streams of rocks a rod or more in diameter each. In some cases which I noticed, the ravine side had evidently been undermined by water on the lower side.

It is surprising how much more bewildering is a mountain top than a level area of the same extent. Its ridges and shelves and ravines add greatly to its apparent extent and diversity. You may be separated from your party by stepping only a rod or two out of the path. We turned off three or four rods to the pond on our way up Lafayette, knowing that H—— was behind, and so we lost him for three quarters of an hour, and did not see him again till we reached the summit. One walking a few rods more to the right or left is not seen over the ridge of the summit, and, other things being equal, this is truer the nearer you are to the apex. If you take one side of a rock, and your companion another, it is enough to separate you sometimes for the rest of the ascent.

On these mountain summits or near them, you find small and almost uninhabited ponds, apparently without fish, sources of rivers, still and

cold, strange and weird as condensed clouds, of which, nevertheless, you make tea! surrounded by dryish bogs in which, perchance, you may detect traces of the bear or *loup cervier*.

We got the best views of the mountains from Conway, Jefferson, Bethlehem, and Campton. Conway combines the Italian (?) level and softness with Alpine peaks around. — Jefferson offers the completest view of the range a dozen or more miles distant, the place from which to behold the manifold varying lights of departing day on the summits. — Bethlehem also afforded a complete but generally more distant view of the range, and, with respect to the highest summits, more diagonal.

Campton afforded a fine distant view of the pyramidal Franconia Mountains, with the lumpish Profile Mountain. The last view, with its smaller intervals and partial view of the great range far in the north, was somewhat like that from Conway. . . .

It is remarkable that what you may call trees on the White Mountains (*i. e.*, the forest), cease abruptly, with those about a dozen or more feet high, and then succeeds a distinct kind of growth, quite dwarfish and flattened, and confined almost entirely to fir and spruce, as if it marked the limit of almost perpetual snow, as if it indicated a zone where the trees were peculi-

arly oppressed by the snow, cold, wind, etc. The transition from these flattened firs and spruces to shrubless rocks is not nearly so abrupt as from upright or slender trees to these dwarfed thickets.

July 3, 1840. When Alexander appears, the Hercynian and Dodonean woods seem to wave a welcome to him. Do not thoughts and men's lives enrich the earth and change the aspect of things as much as a new growth of wood?

What are Godfrey and Gonsalve unless we breathe a life into them, and reënact their exploits as a prelude to our own? The past is only so heroic as we see it; it is the canvas on which our conception of heroism is painted, the dim prospectus of our future field. We are dreaming of what we are to do.

The last sunrise I witnessed seemed to outshine the splendor of all preceding ones, and I was convinced it behoved man to dawn as freshly, and with equal promise and steadiness advance into the career of life, with as lofty and serene a countenance to move onward, through his midday, to a yet fairer and more promising setting. Has the day grown old when it sets? and shall man wear out sooner than the sun? In the crimson colors of the west I discern the budding lines of dawn. To my western brother it is rising pure and bright as it did to me, but

the evening exhibits in the still rear of day the beauty which through morning and noon escaped me. When we are oppressed by the heat and turmoil of the noon, let us remember that the sun which scorches us with brazen beams is gilding the hills of morning, and awaking the woodland choirs for other men.

We will have a dawn and noon and serene sunset in ourselves.

What we call the gross atmosphere of evening is the accumulated deed of the day, which absorbs the rays of beauty, and shows more richly than the naked promise of the dawn. By earnest toil in the heat of the noon, let us get ready a rich western blaze against the evening of our lives.

. . . The sky is delighted with strains [of music] which the connoisseur rejects. It seems to say "Now is this my own earth." In music are the centripetal and centrifugal forces. The universe only needed to hear a divine harmony that every star might fall into its proper place and assume a true sphericity.

July 3, 1852. . . The *Chimaphila umbellata*, winter-green, must have been in blossom some time. The back side of its petals, "cream-colored, tinged with purple," which is turned toward the beholder, while the face is toward the earth, is the handsomer. It is a very pretty

little chandelier of a flower, fit to adorn the forest floor. Its buds are nearly as handsome. They appear to be long in unfolding.

The pickers have quite thinned the crop of early blueberries where Stow cut off the trees winter before last. When the woods on some hill-side are cut off, the *Vaccinium Pennsylvanicum* springs up or grows more luxuriantly, being exposed to light and air, and by the second year its stems are weighed to the ground with clusters of blueberries covered with bloom, and much larger than they commonly grow, also with a livelier taste than usual, as if remembering some primitive mountain side given up to them anciently. Such places supply the villagers with the earliest berries for two or three years, or until the rising wood overgrows them, and they withdraw into the bosom of Nature again. They flourish during the few years between one forest's fall and another's rise. Before you had prepared your mind or made up your mouth for the berries, thinking only of small green ones, earlier by ten days than you had expected, some child of the woods is at your door with ripe blueberries, for did not you know that Mr. Stow cut off his wood-lot winter before last. It is an ill wind that blows nobody any good, and thus it happens that when the owner lays bare and deforms a hill-side, and alone appears to reap any

advantage from it by a crop of wood, all the villagers and the inhabitants of distant cities obtain some compensation in the crop of berries that it yields. They glean after the woodchopper, not faggots, but full baskets of blueberries. . . . Bathed beneath Fair Haven. How much food the muskrats have at hand! They may well be numerous. At this place the bottom in shallow water at a little distance from the shore is thickly covered with clams, half buried and on their ends, generally a little aslant. Sometimes there are a dozen or more side by side within a square foot, and I think that over a space twenty rods long and one wide (I know not how much farther they reach into the river), they would average three to a square foot. This would give 16,335 clams to twenty rods of shore, on one side of the river, and I suspect there are many more. No wonder that muskrats multiply, and that the shores are covered with the shells left by them. In bathing here I can hardly step without treading on them, sometimes half a dozen at once, and often I cut my feet pretty severely on their shells. They are partly covered with mud and the short weeds at the bottom, and they are of the same color themselves, but stooping down over them where the soil has subsided, I can see them now at 5.30 P. M. with their mouths (?) open, an inch long

and quarter of an inch wide, with a waving fringe about it, and another smaller opening close to it without any fringe, through both of which I see distinctly into the white interior of the fish. When I touch one, he instantly closes his shell, and, if taken out quickly, spurts water like a salt-water clam. Evidently taking in their food and straining it with short waving motion of the ciliæ, there they lie both under the pads and in the sun. . . . The common carrot by the roadside, *Daucus carota*, is in some respects an interesting plant. Its umbel, as Bigelow says, is shaped like a bird's nest, and its large pinatifid involucre, interlacing by its fine segments, resembles a fanciful ladies' work-basket.

July 3, 1853. The oven-bird's nest in Laurel Glen is near the edge of an open pine wood under a fallen pine twig and a heap of dry oak leaves. Within these on the ground is the nest with a dome-like top and an arched entrance of the whole height and width on one side. Lined within with dry pine needles. . . . The chestnut behind my old house site is fully out, and apparently has been partly so for several days.

Black huckleberries. — Tansy on the causeway.

July 3, 1854. I hear the purple finch these days about the houses, *à twitter witter weeter wee, à witter witter wee.*

P. M. To Hubbard's Bridge by boat. . . . The river and shores with their pads and weeds are now in their midsummer and hot weather condition, now when the pontederias have just begun to bloom. The seething river is confined within two burnished borders of pads, gleaming in the sun for a mile, and a sharp snap is heard from them from time to time. Next stands the upright phalanx of dark-green pontederias. — When I have left the boat for a short time, the seats become intolerably hot. What a luxury to bathe now. It is gloriously hot, the first of this weather. I cannot get wet enough. I must let the water soak into me. When you come out, it is rapidly dried on you, or absorbed into your body, and you want to go in again. I begin to inhabit the planet, and see how I may be naturalized at last. — As I return from the river, the sun westering, I admire the silvery light on the tops and extremities of the now densely-leaved golden willows, and swamp white oaks and maples, from the under-side of the leaves. They have so multiplied that you cannot see through the trees; these are solid depths of shade on the surface of which the light is variously reflected.

July 3, 1856. P. M. To Assabet River. In the main stream at the Rock I am surprised to see flags and pads laying the foundation of an

islet in the middle where I had thought it deep before. Apparently a hummock, lifted by ice, sunk there in the spring, and this may be the way in which many an island has been formed in the river.

July 3, 1859. . . . P. M. To Hubbard's Grove. . . . The *Mitchella repens*, so abundantly in bloom now in the northwest part of this grove, emits a strong, astringent, cherry-like scent as I walk over it, which is agreeable to me, spotting the ground with its downy-looking white flowers.

July 3, 1860. . . . Looked at the marsh-hawk's nest (of June 16) in the Great Meadows. It was in the very midst of the sweet gale (which is three feet high) occupying an opening only a foot or two across. We had much difficulty in finding it again, but at last nearly stumbled upon a young hawk. There was one as big as my fist resting on the bare flat nest in the sun, with a great head, staring eyes, and open, gaping, or pouting mouth, yet mere down, grayish-white down as yet; but I detected another which had crawled a foot one side amid the bushes for shade or safety, more than half as large again, with small feathers, and a yet more angry, hawk-like look. How naturally anger sits on the young hawk's head. It was 3.30 P. M., and the old birds were gone and saw us not. Meanwhile

their callow young lie panting under the sweet gale and rose-bushes in the swamp, waiting for their parents to fetch them food.

June is an up-country month when our air and landscape is most like that of a mountainous region, full of freshness, with the scent of fern by the wayside.

July 4, 1840. 4 A. M. The Townsend Light Infantry encamped last night in my neighbor's enclosure.—The night still breathes slumberously over field and wood when a few soldiers gather about one tent in the twilight, and their band plays an old Scotch air with bugle and drum and fife attempered to the season. It seems like the morning hymn of creation. The first sounds of the awakening camp mingled with the chastened strains which so sweetly salute the dawn, impress me as the morning prayer of an army. And now the morning gun fires. . . . I am sure none are cowards now. These strains are the roving dreams which steal from tent to tent, and break forth into distinct melody. They are the soldier's morning thought. Each man awakes himself with lofty emotions, and would do some heroic deed. You need preach no homily to him. He is the stuff they are made of.

We may well neglect many things, provided we overlook them.

When to-day I saw the "Great Ball" rolled

majestically along, it seemed a shame that man could not move like it. All dignity and grandeur has something of the undulatoriness of the sphere. It is the secret of majesty in the rolling gait of the elephant, and of all grace in action and in art. The line of beauty is a curve.

Each man seems striving to imitate its gait, and keep pace with it, but it moves on regardless, and conquers the multitude with its majesty. What shame that our lives which should be the source of planetary motion, and sanction the order of the spheres, are full of abruptness and angularity, so as not to roll nor move majestically.

July 4, 1852. 3 A. M. To Conantum, to see the lilies open. I hear an occasional crowing of cocks in distant barns, as has been their habit for how many thousand years. It was so when I was young, and it will be so when I am old. I hear the croak of a tree-toad as I am crossing the yard. I am surprised to find the dawn so far advanced. There is a yellowish segment of light in the east, paling a star, and adding sensibly to the light of the waning and now declining moon. . . . I hear a little twittering and some clear singing from the seringo and the song-sparrow as I go along the back road, and now and then the note of a bull-frog from the river. The light in the east has acquired a reddish tinge

near the horizon. Small wisps of cloud are already fuscous and dark, seen against the light, as in the west at evening. It being Sunday morning I hear no early stirring farmer driving over a bridge. . . . The sound of a whippoorwill is wafted from the woods. Now in the Corner road the hedges are alive with twittering sparrows, a blue-bird or two, etc. The daylight now balances the moonlight. How short the nights! The last traces of day have not disappeared much before 10 o'clock, or perchance 9.30, and before 3 A. M. you see them again in the east (probably 2.30), leaving about five hours of solid night, the sun so soon coming round again. The robins sing, but not so long and loud as in the spring. I have not been awakened by them latterly in the mornings. Is it my fault? Ah, those mornings when you are awakened by the singing, the matins of the birds! . . . Methinks I saw the not yet extinguished lights of one or two fire-flies in the darker ruts in the grass in Conant's meadow. The moon yields to the sun, she pales even in the presence of the dawn. It is chiefly the spring birds that I hear at this hour, and in each dawn the spring is thus revived. The notes of the sparrows, and the blue-birds and the robin, have a prominence now which they have not by day. The light is more and more general, and some low bars begin to look bluish as well

as reddish. Elsewhere the sky is wholly clear of clouds. The dawn is at this stage far lighter than the brightest moonlight ; I write by it. Yet the sun will not rise for some time. Those bars are reddening more above one spot. They grow purplish, or lilac rather.

White and whiter grows the light in the eastern sky. And now descending to the Cliff by the river side, I cannot see the low horizon and its phenomena.

I love to go through these old apple orchards so irregularly set out, sometimes two trees standing close together. The rows of grafted fruit will never tempt me to wander amid them like these. A bittern leaves the shore at my approach. A night-hawk squeaks and booms before sunrise. . . . I hear the blackbird's *conqueree*, and the kingfisher darts away with his *alarum* and outstretched neck. Every lily is shut. Sunrise. I see it gilding the top of the hill behind me, but the sun itself is concealed by the hills and woods on the east shore. A very slight fog begins to rise now in one place on the river. There is something serenely glorious and memorable to me in the sight of the first cool sunlight now gilding the eastern extremity of the bushy island in Fair Haven, that wild lake. The subdued light and the repose remind me of Hades. In such sunlight there

is no fever. It is such an innocent pale yellow as the spring flowers. It is the pollen of the sun fertilizing plants. The color of the earliest spring flowers is as cool and innocent as the first rays of the sun in the morning, falling on woods and hills. The fog not only rises upward about two feet, but at once there is a motion from the sun over the surface. . . .

And now I see an army of skaters advancing in loose array, chasseurs or scouts, as Indian allies are drawn in old books. Now the rays of the sun have reached my seat, a few feet above the water. Flies begin to buzz, mosquitoes to be less troublesome. A humming-bird hums by over the pads up the river, as if looking, like myself, to see if lilies have blossomed. The birds begin to sing generally, and if not loudest, at least most noticeably on account of the quietness of the hour, a few minutes before sunrise. They do not sing so incessantly and earnestly, as a regular thing, half an hour later. — Carefully looking both up and down the river, I could perceive that the lilies began to open about fifteen minutes after the sun from over the opposite bank fell on them, perhaps three-quarters of an hour after sunrise, which is about 4.30, and one was fully expanded about twenty minutes later. When I returned over the bridge about 6.15, there were perhaps a dozen open

ones in sight. It was very difficult to find one not injured by insects. Even the buds which were just about to expand were frequently bored quite through, and the water had rotted them. You must be on hand early to anticipate insects. I bring home a dozen perfect lily buds, all I can find within many rods, which have never yet opened. I prepare a large pan of water, and cutting their stems quite short, I turn back their calyx leaves with my fingers, so that they may float upright; then, touching the points of their petals, and breathing or blowing on them, I toss them in. They spring open rapidly, or gradually expand in the course of an hour, all but one or two. — At 12.30 P. M. I perceive that the lilies in the river have begun to shut up. . . . I go again at 2.30 P. M. and every lily is shut.

I will here tell the history of my rosaceous lilies, plucked the 1st of July. They were buds at the bottom of a pitcher of water all the 2d, having been kept in my hat part of the day before. On the morning of the 3d I assisted their opening, and put them in water, as I have described. They did not shut up at noon, like those on the river, but at dark, their petals, at least, quite close. They all opened again in the course of the forenoon of the 4th, but had not shut up at 10 o'clock P. M., though I found them

shut on the morning of the 5th. May it be that they can bear only a certain amount of light, and so, being in the shade, remained open longer (I think not, for they shut up on the river that quite cloudy day, July 1), or is their vitality too little to allow them to perform their regular functions?

Can that meadow fragrance come from the purple summits of the eupatorium?

July 4, 1860. Standing on J. P. Brown's land, south side, I observed his rich and luxuriant uncut grass lands northward, now waving under the easterly wind. It is a beautiful camilla, sweeping like waves of light and shade over the whole breadth of his land, like a low steam curling over it, imparting wonderful life to the landscape, like the light and shade of a changeable garment. . . . It is an interesting feature, very easily overlooked, and suggests that we are wading and navigating at present in a sort of sea of grass which yields and undulates under the wind like water, and so perchance the forest is seen to do from a favorable position. . . . Early there was that flashing light of waving pines in the horizon, now the camilla on grass and grain.

July 5, 1840. Go where we will, we discover infinite change in particulars only, not in generals.

You cannot rob a man of anything which he will miss.

July 5, 1852. I know a man who never speaks of the sexual relation but jestingly, though it is a subject to be approached only with reverence and affection. What can be the character of that man's love? It is ever the subject of a stale jest, though his health or his dinner can be seriously considered. The glory of the world is seen only by a chaste mind. To whomsoever this fact is not an awful, but beautiful mystery, there are no flowers in Nature.

White lilies continue to open in the house in the morning and shut in the night, for five or six days, until their stamens have shed their pollen, and they turn rusty, and begin to decay. Then the beauty of the flower is gone, and its vitality, so that it no longer expands with the light.

How perfect an invention is glass! There is a fitness in glass windows which reflect the sun morning and evening; windows the doorways of light thus reflecting its rays with a splendor only second to itself. . . . The sun rises with a salute, and leaves the world with a farewell to our windows. To have, instead of opaque shutters, or dull horn or paper, a material like solidified air, which reflects the sun thus brightly. It is inseparable from our civilization and enlight-

enment. It is encouraging that this intelligence and brilliancy or splendor should belong to the dwellings of men, and not to the cliffs and micaceous rocks and lakes exclusively. . . .

P. M. To Second Division Brook.

There is a meadow on the Assabet, just above Derby's bridge (it may contain an acre, bounded on one side by the river, on the other by alders and a hill), completely covered with small hummocks which have lodged on it in the winter, covering it like the mounds in a graveyard, at pretty regular intervals. Their edges are rounded, and they and the paths between them are covered with a firm, short, green sward, with here and there hard-hacks springing out of them, so that they make excellent seats, especially in the shade of an elm that grows there. They are completely united with the meadow, forming little oblong hillocks from one to ten feet long. . . . I love to ponder the natural history thus written on the banks of the stream; for every higher freshet and intenser frost is recorded by it. The stream keeps a faithful journal of every event in its experience, whatever race may settle on its banks. It purls past this natural graveyard with a storied murmur, and no doubt it could find endless employment for an Old Mortality in renewing its epitaphs.

The progress of the season is indescribable.

It is growing warm again, but the warmth is different from that we have had. We lie in the shade of a locust-tree. Haymakers go by in a hay-rigging. I am reminded of berrying. I scent the sweet fern and the dead or dry pine leaves. Cherry-birds alight on a neighboring tree. The warmth is something more normal and steady. Nature offers fruits now as well as flowers. We have become accustomed to the summer. It has acquired a certain eternity. The earth is dry. Perhaps the sound of the locust expresses the season as well as anything. I might make a separate season of those days when the locust is heard. That is our torrid zone. This dryness and heat are necessary for the maturing of fruits.

How cheering it is to behold a full spring bursting forth directly from the earth, like this of Tarbell's, from clean gravel, copiously in a thin sheet; for it descends at once, where you see no opening, cool from the caverns of the earth, and making a considerable stream. . . . I lie almost flat, resting my hands on what offers, to drink at this water where it bubbles, at the very udders of Nature, for man is never weaned from her breast while life lasts.

We are favored in having two rivers flowing into one, whose banks afford different kinds of scenery, the streams being of different charac

ters, one a dark, muddy, dead stream, full of animal and vegetable life, with broad meadows, and black, dwarf willows and weeds, the other comparatively pebbly and swift, with more abrupt banks and narrower meadows. To the latter I go to see the ripple and the varied bottom with its stones and sands and shadows; to the former for the influence of its dark water resting on invisible mud, and for its reflections. It is a factory of soil, depositing sediment. . . .

Some birds are poets and sing all summer. They are the true singers. Any man can write verses in the love season. I am reminded of this while we rest in the shade . . . and listen to a wood-thrush now just before sunset. We are most interested in those birds that sing for the love of the music and not of their mates; who meditate their strains and amuse themselves with singing; the birds whose strains are of deeper sentiment,—not bobolinks that lose their bright colors and their song so early,—the robin, the red-eye, the veery, the wood-thrush, etc. The wood-thrush's is no opera music, it is not so much the composition as the strain, the tone that interests us, cool bars of melody from the atmosphere of everlasting morning or evening. It is the quality of the sound, not the sequence. In the pewee's note there is some sultriness, but in the thrush's, though heard at noon, there is

the liquid coolness of things drawn from the bottom of springs. The thrush's alone declares the immortal wealth and vigor that is in the forest. Here is a bird in whose strain the story is told. Whenever a man hears it, he is young, and Nature is in her spring. Wherever he hears it, there is a new world and a free country, and the gates of heaven are not shut against him. Most other birds sing, from the level of my ordinary cheerful hours, a carol, but this bird never fails to speak to me out of an ether purer than that I breathe, of immortal vigor and beauty. He deepens the significance of all things seen in the light of his strain. He sings to make men take higher and truer views. . . . He sings to amend their institutions, to relieve the slave on the plantation and the prisoner in his dungeon, the slave in the house of luxury and the prisoner of his own low thoughts.

How fitting to have every day, in a vase of water on your table, the wild flowers of the season which are just blossoming. Can any house be said to be furnished without them? Shall we be so forward to pluck the fruits of Nature and neglect her flowers? These are surely her finest influences. So may the season suggest the thoughts it is fitted to suggest. . . . Let me know what picture Nature is painting, what poetry she is writing, what ode composing now.

The sun has set. . . . The dew is falling fast. Some fine clouds, which have just escaped being condensed in dew, hang on the skirts of day, and make the attraction in our western sky, that part of day's gross atmosphere which has escaped the clutches of the night, and is not enough condensed to fall to earth, soon to be gilded by the sun's parting rays; remarkably finely divided clouds, a very fine mackerel sky, or rather as if one had sprinkled that part of the sky with a brush, the outline of the whole being that of several large sprigs of fan coral. They grow darker and darker, and now are reddened, while dark-blue bars of cloud of a wholly different character lie along the northwest horizon.

July 5, 1854. . . . P. M. To White Pond. . . . The blue curls and fragrant life-everlasting with their refreshing aroma show themselves now pushing up in dry fields, bracing to the thought. — On Lupine Knoll picked up a dark-colored spear-head three and a half inches long, lying on the bare sand, so hot that I could not long hold it tight in my hand. Now the earth begins to be parched, the corn curls, and the four-leaved loosestrife, etc., wilt and wither.

July 5, 1856. The large evening primrose below the foot of our garden does not open till sometime between 6.30 and 8 P. M., or sundown. It was not open when I went to bathe, but

freshly out in the cool of the evening at sundown, as if enjoying the serenity of the hour.

July 6, 1840. All this worldly wisdom was once the unamiable heresy of some wise man. — I observe a truly wise practice on every hand, in education, in religion, and the morals of society, enough embodied wisdom to have set up many an ancient philosopher. This society, if it were a person to be met face to face, would not only be tolerated but courted, with its so impressive experience and admirable acquaintance with things. — Consider society at any epoch, and who does not see that heresy has already prevailed in it?

Have no mean hours, but be grateful for every hour, and accept what it brings. The reality will make any sincere record respectable. No day will have been wholly misspent, if any sincere, thoughtful page has been written. Let the daily tide leave some deposit on these pages, as it leaves sand and shells on the shore, so much increase of terra firma. This may be a calendar of the ebbs and flows of the soul, and on these sheets, as a beach, the waves may cast up pearls and seaweed.

July 6, 1851. I walked by night last moon, and saw its disk reflected in Walden Pond, the broken disk, now here, now there, a pure and memorable flame, unearthly bright. . . . Ah!

but that first faint tinge of moonlight on the gap seen some time ago, a silvery light from the east before day had departed in the west. What an immeasurable interval there is between the first tinge of moonlight which we detect, lighting with mysterious, silvery, poetic light the western slopes, like a paler grass, and the last wave of daylight on the eastern slopes. It is wonderful how our senses ever span so vast an interval; how, from being aware of the one, we become aware of the other. . . . It suggests an interval equal to that between the most distant periods recorded in history. The silver age is not more distant from the golden than moonlight is from sunlight. I am looking into the west where the red clouds still indicate the course of departing day. I turn and see the silent, spiritual, contemplative moonlight shedding the softest imaginable light on the western slopes, . . . as if, after a thousand years of polishing, their surfaces were just beginning to be bright, a pale, whitish lustre. Already the crickets chirp to the moon a different strain, and the night wind rustles the leaves of the wood. . . . Ah, there is the mysterious light which for some hours has illustrated Asia and the scene of Alexander's victories, now at length, after two or three hours spent in surmounting the billows of the Atlantic, come to shine on America. There on that illustrated

sand bank was revealed an antiquity beside which Nineveh is young, such a light as sufficed for the earliest ages. . . . Even at midday I see the full moon shining in the sky. What if in some vales only its light is reflected! What if there are some spirits which walk in its light alone still! . . . I passed from dynasty to dynasty, from one age of the world to another, . . . from Jove, perchance, back to Saturn. What river of Lethe was there to run between! I bade farewell to that light setting in the west, and turned to salute the new light rising in the east.

There is some advantage in being the humblest, cheapest, least dignified man in the village, so that the very stable boys shall damn you. Methinks I enjoy that advantage to an unusual extent. There is many a coarsely well-meaning fellow, who knows only the skin of me, who addresses me familiarly by my Christian name. I get the whole good of him, and lose nothing myself. There is "Sam," the jailer (whom I never call "Sam," however), who exclaimed last evening, "Thoreau, are you going up the street pretty soon? Well, just take a couple of these handbills along, and drop one on H——'s piazza, and one at H——'s, and I'll do as much for you another time." I am not above being used, aye abused, sometimes.

July 6, 1852. 2.30 P. M. To Beck Stow's, thence to Sawmill Brook, and return by Walden. — Now for the shade of oaks in pastures. The witnesses attending court sit on the benches in the shade of the great elm. The cattle gather under the trees. The pewee is heard in the heat of the day, and the red-eye (?). The pure white cymes (?) of the elder are very conspicuous along the edges of meadows, contrasting with the green above and around. . . . From the lane in front of Hawthorne's, I see dense beds of tufted vetch, *Vicia cracca*, for some time, taking the place of the grass in the low grounds, blue inclining in spots to lilac like the lupines. This, too, was one of the flowers that Proserpine was gathering; yellow lilies, also. It is affecting to see such an abundance of blueness in the grass. It affects the eyes, this celestial color. I see it afar . . . in masses on the hill-sides near the meadow, so much blue, laid on with so heavy a hand! — In selecting a site in the country, let a lane near your house, grass-grown, cross a sizable brook where is a watering-place. — I see a pickerel in the brook showing his whitish, greedy upper lips projecting over the lower. How well concealed he is. He is generally of the color of the muddy bottom, or the decayed leaves and wood that compose it, and the longitudinal light stripe on his back, and the transverse ones on his

sides are the color of the yellowish sand here and there exposed. He heads up stream and keeps his body perfectly motionless, however rapid the current, chiefly by the motion of his narrow pectoral fins, though also by the waving of his other fins and tail as much as is necessary, a motion which a frog might mistake for that of weeds. Thus concealed by his color and stillness, like a stake, he lies in wait for frogs and minnows. Now a frog leaps in, and he darts forward three or four feet.

Pastinaca sativa, parsnip. How wholesome and edible smells its sweet root. — Tansy, *Tanacetum vulgare*, just begins.

H—— is haying, but inclined to talk as usual. . . . I am disappointed that he, the most intelligent farmer in Concord, and perchance in Middlesex, who admits that he has property enough for his use without accumulating more, and talks of leaving off hard work, letting his farm, and spending the rest of his days easier and better, cannot yet think of any method of employing himself except in work for his hands. Only he would have a little less of it. Much as he is inclined to speculate in conversation, giving up any work to it for the time, and long-headed as he is, he talks of working for a neighbor for a day now and then, and taking his dollar. “He would not like to spend his time sitting on the

Mill Dam" [*i. e.*, in the village]. He has not even planned an essentially better life. . . .

Sometimes the swampy vigor in large doses proves rank poison to the sensitively bred man, as where dogwood grows. How far he has departed from the rude vigor of Nature, that he cannot assimilate and transmute her elements. The morning air may make a debauchee sick. No herb is friendly to him. All at last are poisons, and yet none are medicines to him, and so he dies; the air kills him. . . .

I heard a solitary duck on Goose Pond making a doleful cry, though its ordinary one, just before sundown, as if caught in a trap or by a fox, and creeping silently through the bushes, I saw it, probably a wood duck, sailing rapidly away. But it still repeated its cry as if calling for a mate. When the hen hatches ducks, they do not mind her clucking. They lead the hen. — Chickens and ducks are well set on the earth. What great legs they have! This part is early developed. A perfect Antæus is a young duck in this respect, deriving a steady stream of health and strength from the earth, for he rarely gets off it, ready either for land or water. Nature is not on her last legs yet. A chick's stout legs! If they were a little larger, they would injure the globe's tender organization with their scratching. Then, for digestion, consider their crops

and what they put into them in the course of a day. Consider how well fitted to endure the fatigue of a day's excursion. A young chick will run all day in pursuit of grasshoppers, and occasionally vary its exercise by scratching, go to bed at night with protuberant crop, and get up early in the morning ready for a new start.

July 6, 1856. P. M. To Assabet bath. . . .
I hear the distressed or anxious peet of a peet-weet, and see it hovering over its young, half-grown, which runs beneath, and suddenly hides securely in the grass when but a few feet from me.

G. Emerson says the sweetbrier was doubtless introduced, yet according to Bancroft, Gossnold found it on the Elizabeth Isles.

July 6, 1859. . . . P. M. To Lee's Cliff. . . .
The heart-leaf flower is now very conspicuous and pretty in that pool westerly of the old Conantum house. Its little, white, five-petalled flower, about the size of a five-cent piece, looks like a little white lily. Its perfectly heart-shaped floating leaf, an inch or more long, is the smallest kind of pad. There is a single pad to each slender stem which is from one to several feet long in proportion to the depth of the water, and these padlets cover sometimes, like an imbrication, the whole surface of a pool. Close underneath each leaf or pad is concealed an umbel of

from ten to fifteen flower buds of various sizes, and of these, one at a time (and sometimes more) curls upward between the lobes of the base and expands its corolla to the light and air, about half an inch above the water, and so on successively till all have flowered. Over the whole surface of the shallow pool you see thus each little pad with its pretty lily between its lobes turned toward the sun. It is simply leaf and flower.

July 7, 1840. I have experienced such simple joy in the trivial matters of fishing and sporting formerly as might inspire the muse of Homer or Shakespeare. And now when I turn over the pages and ponder the plates of the "Angler's Souvenir," I exclaim with the poet,

"Can these things be, and overcome us like
A summer's cloud?"

When I hear a sudden burst from a horn, I am startled, as if one had provoked such wildness as he could not rule nor tame. He dares make the echoes which he cannot put to rest.

July 7, 1851. The intimations of the night are divine, methinks. Men might meet in the morning and report the news of the night, what divine suggestions have been made to them. I find that I carry with me into the day often some such hint derived from the gods, such impulses

to purity, to heroism, to literary effort, even, as are never day-born.

One of those mornings which usher in no day, but rather an endless morning, a protracted auroral season, for clouds prolong the twilight the livelong day.

Now that there is an interregnum in the blossoming of the flowers, so is there in the singing of the birds. The golden robin, the bobolink, etc., are rarely heard.

I rejoice when in a dream I have loved virtue and nobleness.

Where is Grecian History? Is it when in the morning I recall the intimations of the night?

The moon is now more than half full. When I come through the village at ten o'clock this cold night, cold as in May, the heavy shadows of the elms, covering the ground with their rich tracery, impress me as if men had got so much more than they bargained for, — not only trees to stand in the air, but to checker the ground with their shadows. At night they lie along the earth. They tower, they arch, they droop over the streets like chandeliers of darkness.

With a certain wariness, but not without a slight shudder at the danger oftentimes, I perceive how near I had come to admitting into my mind the details of some trivial affair, as a case

at court, and I am astonished to observe how willing men are to lumber their minds with such rubbish, to permit idle rumors, tales, incidents, even of an insignificant kind, to intrude upon what should be the sacred ground of the thoughts. Shall the temple of our thoughts be a public arena where the most trivial affair of the market and the gossip of the tea-table is discussed, a dusty, noisy, trivial place? or shall it be a quarter of the heavens itself, consecrated to the service of the gods, a hypæthral temple? I find it so difficult to dispose of the few facts which to me are significant, that I hesitate to burden my mind with the most insignificant, which only a divine mind can illustrate. Such is, for the most part, the news in newspapers and conversation. It is important to preserve the mind's chastity in this respect. Think of admitting the details of a single case at the criminal court into the mind to stalk profanely through its very *sanctum sanctorum* for an hour, — aye, for many hours; to make a very bar-room of your mind's inmost apartment, as if for a moment the dust of the street had occupied you, — aye, the very street itself, with all its travel, had poured through your very mind of minds, your thought's shrine, with all its filth and bustle. Would it not be an intellectual suicide? By all manner of boards and traps threatening the ex-

treme penalty of the divine law, excluding trespassers from these grounds, it behoves us to preserve the purity and sanctity of the mind. It is so hard to forget what it is worse than useless to remember. If I am to be a channel or thoroughfare, I prefer that it be of the mountain brooks, the Parnassian streams, and not of the city sewers. There is inspiration, the divine gossip which comes to the attentive mind from the Courts of Heaven, there is the profane and stale revelation of the bar-room and the police court. The same ear is fitted to receive both communications. Only the character of the individual determines to which source chiefly it shall be open, and to which closed. I believe that the mind can be profaned by the habit of attending to trivial things, so that all our thoughts shall be tinged with triviality. They shall be dusty as stones in the street. Our very minds shall be paved and macadamized, their foundation broken into fragments for the wheels of travel to roll over. If you would know what will make the most durable pavements, surpassing rolled stones, spruce blocks, and asphaltum, you have only to look into some mens' minds. If we have thus desecrated ourselves, the remedy will be by circumspection and wariness, by aspiration and devotion to consecrate ourselves, to make a fane of the mind. I think we should treat our

minds as innocent and ingenuous children whose guardians we are, be careful what objects and what subjects are thrust on their attention. I think even the facts of science may dust them by their dryness, unless they are in a sense effaced each morning, or rather rendered fertile by the dews of fresh and living truth. Every thought which passes through the mind helps to wear and tear it, and to deepen the ruts, which, as in the streets of Pompeii, evince how much it has been used. How many things there are concerning which we might well deliberate whether we had better know them. Routine, conventionality, manners, etc.; how insensibly an undue attention to these dissipates and impoverishes the mind, robs it of its simplicity and strength, emasculates it.

Knowledge does not come to us by details, but by *lieferungs* from the gods.

Only thought which is expressed by the mind in repose, or, as it were, lying on its back and contemplating the heavens, is adequately and fully expressed. What are sidelong, transient, passing half views? The writer expressing his thoughts must be as well seated as the astronomer contemplating the heavens. He must not occupy a constrained position. The facts, the experience we are well poised upon! which secure our whole attention!

The senses of children are unprofaned. Their whole body is one sense, they take a physical pleasure in riding on a rail. So does the unviolated, the unsophisticated mind derive an inexpressible pleasure from the simplest exercise of thought.

I can express adequately only the thought which I love to express.

All the faculties in repose but the one you are using, the whole energy concentrated in that.

Be so little distracted, your thoughts so little confused, your engagements so few, your attention so free, your existence so mundane, that in all places and in all hours you can hear the sound of crickets in those seasons when they are to be heard. It is a mark of serenity and health of mind when a person hears this sound much in streets of cities as well as in fields. Some ears can never hear this sound ; are called deaf. Is it not because they have so long attended to other sounds ?

July 7, 1852. 4 A. M. The first (?) really foggy morning. Yet before I rise, I hear the song of birds from out it like the bursting of its bubbles with music. . . . Their song gilds thus the frost work of the morning. . . . I came near waking this morning. I am older than last year. The mornings are further between. The days are fewer. Any excess, to have drunk too much

water even the day before, is fatal to the morning's clarity. But in health, the sound of a cow bell is celestial music. O might I always wake to thought and poetry, regenerated! Can it be called a morning, if our senses are not clarified so that we perceive more clearly? if we do not rise with elastic vigor?

How wholesome these fogs which some fear. They are cool, medicated vapor baths mingled by Nature, which bring to our senses all the medical properties of the meadows; the touchstones of health. Sleep with all your windows open, and let the mist embrace you.

To the Cliffs. The fog condenses into fountains and streams of music, as in the strain of the bobolink which I hear, and runs off so. The music of the birds is the tinkling of the rills that flow from it. I cannot see twenty rods. . . .

There is everywhere dew on the cobwebs, little gossamer veils or scarfs as big as your hand dropped from the shoulders of fairies that danced on the grass the past night. . . . The to me beautiful rose-colored spikes of the hardhack, *Spiræa tomentosa*; one is out. — I think it was this thin vapor that produced a kind of mirage when I looked over the meadow from the railroad last night toward Trillium wood, giving to the level meadow a certain liquid, sea-like look. Now the heads of herd's grass, seen through the dispersing fog, look like an ocean of grass.

6 P. M. To Hubbard's Bathing Place. Pogonias are still abundant in the meadows, but arethusas I have not lately seen. . . . The blue-eyed grass shuts up before sunset. . . . The very handsome "pink-purple" flowers of the *Calopogon! pulchellus* enrich the grass all around the edge of Hubbard's blueberry swamp, and are now in their prime. The *Arethusa bulbosa*, "crystalline purple," *Pogonia ophioglossoides*, snake-mouthed [tongued] arethusa, "pale purple," and the *Calopogon pulchellus*, grass pink, "pink-purple," make one family in my mind (next to the purple orchis, or with it), being flowers *par excellence*, all flower, naked flowers, and difficult, at least the calopogon, to preserve. But they are flowers, excepting the first, at least, without a name. Pogonia! Calopogon!! They would blush still deeper if they knew what names man had given them. The first and the last interest me most, for the pogonia has a strong, snaky odor. The first may perhaps retain its name, arethusa, from the places in which it grows, and the other two deserve the names of nymphs, perhaps of the class called Naiades. How would the *Naiad Ægle* do for one? . . . To be sure, in a perfect flower, there will be proportion between the flowers and leaves, but these are fair and delicate, nymph-like. . . . When the yellow lily flowers in the meadows, and the red in dry lands and by wood-paths, then,

methinks, the flowering season has reached its height. They surprise me as perhaps no more can. Now I am prepared for anything.

July 7, 1857. . . . Some of the inhabitants of the Cape think that the Cape is theirs, and all occupied by them, but, in my eyes, it is no more theirs than it is the blackbirds', and in visiting the Cape there is hardly more need of my regarding or going through the villages than of going through the blackbirds' nests. I leave them both on one side, or perchance I just glance into them to see how they are built and what they contain. I know that they have *spoken for* the whole Cape, and lines are drawn on the maps accordingly, but I know that these are imaginary, having perambulated many such, and they would have to get me or one of my craft to find them for them. For the most part, indeed with very trifling exceptions, there were no human beings there, only a few imaginary lines on a map.

July 8, 1838.

CLIFFS.

The loudest sound that burdens here the breeze
Is the wood's whisper ; 't is when we choose to list,
Audible sound, and when we list not,
It is calm profound. Tongues were provided
But to vex the ear with superficial thoughts.
When deeper thoughts up swell, the jarring discord
Of harsh speech is hushed, and senses seem
As little as may be to share the ecstasy.

July 8, 1840. Doubt and falsehood are yet good preachers. They affirm soundly while they deny partially.

I am pleased to learn that Thales was up and stirring by night not unfrequently, as his astronomical discoveries prove.

It was a saying of Solon that "it is necessary to observe a medium in all things." The golden mean in ethics as in physics is the centre of the system, that about which all revolve, and though to a distant and plodding planet it is the uttermost extreme, yet when that planet's year is complete, it will be found central. They who are alarmed lest virtue run into extreme good have not yet wholly embraced her, but described only a small arc about her, and from so small a curvature you can calculate no centre whatever. Their mean is no better than meanness, nor their medium than mediocrity. If a brave man observes strictly this golden mean, he may run through all extremes with impunity, like the sun which now appears in the zenith, now in the horizon, and again is faintly reflected from the moon's disk, and has the credit of describing an entire great circle, crossing the equinoctial and solstitial colures, without detriment to his steadfastness.

Every planet asserts its own to be the centre of the system.

Only meanness is mediocre, moderate ; the true medium is not contained within any bounds, but is as wide as the ends it connects.

When Solon endeavored to prove that Salamis had formerly belonged to the Athenians, and not to the Megarians, he caused the tombs to be opened, and showed that the inhabitants of Salamis turned the faces of their dead to the same side with the Athenians, but the Megarians to the opposite side. So does each fact bear witness to all, and the history of all the past may be read in a single grain of its ashes.

July 8, 1851. . . . I am struck by the cool, juicy, pickled-cucumber green of the potato-fields now. How lusty these vines look. The pasture naturally exhibits at this season no such living green as the cultivated fields. . . . Here are mulleins covering a field where three years ago none were noticeable, but a smooth, uninterrupted pasture sod. Two years ago it was ploughed for the first time for many years, and millet and corn and potatoes planted. Now, where the millet grew, these mulleins have sprung up. Who can write the history of these fields? The millet does not perpetuate itself, but the few seeds of the mullein which perchance were brought here with it are still multiplying the race. . . .

Here are some rich rye-fields waving over all the land, their heads nodding in the evening breeze, with an apparently alternating motion, *i. e.*, they do not all bend at once, by ranks, but separately, and hence this agreeable alternation. How rich a sight this cereal fruit, now yellow for the cradle, *flavus*. It is an impenetrable phalanx. I walk for half a mile, looking in vain for an opening. . . . This is food for man. The earth labors not in vain. It is bearing its burden. The yellow, waving, rustling rye extends far up and over the hills on either side, a kind of pinafore to Nature, leaving only a narrow and dark passage at the bottom of a deep ravine. How rankly it has grown! How it hastes to maturity! I discover that there is such a goddess as Ceres. . . . The small trees and shrubs seen dimly in its midst are overwhelmed by the grain as by an inundation. They are seen only as indistinct forms of bushes and green leaves, mixed with the yellow stalks. There are certain crops which give me the idea of bounty, of the *Alma Natura*. They are the grains. Potatoes do not so fill the lap of earth. This rye excludes everything else, and takes possession of the soil. The farmer says, next year I will raise a crop of rye, and he proceeds to clear away the brush, and either ploughs it, or, if it is too uneven or stony, burns and harrows

it only and scatters the seed with faith. And all winter the earth keeps his secret, unless it did leak out somewhat in the fall, and in the spring this early green on the hillsides betrays him. When I see this luxuriant crop spreading far and wide, in spite of rock and bushes and unevenness of ground, I cannot help thinking that it must have been unexpected by the farmer himself, and regarded by him as a lucky accident for which to thank fortune. This to reward a transient faith the gods had given.

July 8, 1852. P. M. Down river in boat to the Holt. . . . It is perhaps the warmest day yet. We held on to the abutments under the Red Bridge to cool ourselves in the shade. No better place in hot weather, the river rippling away beneath you, and the air rippling through between the abutments, if only in sympathy with the river, while the planks afford a shade, and you hear all the travel and the travelers' talk without being seen or suspected. . . . There is generally a current of air circulating over water, always, methinks, if the water runs swiftly, as if it put the air in motion. There is quite a breeze here this sultry day. Commend me to the sub-pontean, the under-bridge life.

I am inclined to think bathing almost one of the necessities of life, but it is surprising how indifferent some are to it. What a coarse, foul,

busy life we lead compared even with the South Sea Islanders in some respects. Truant boys steal away to bathe, but the farmers, who most need it, rarely dip their bodies into the streams or ponds. M—— was telling me last night that he had thought of bathing when he had done his hoeing, of taking some soap and going down to Walden, and giving himself a good scrubbing, but something had occurred to prevent, and now he will go unwashed to the harvesting, aye, even till the next hoeing is over. Better the faith and practice of the Hindoos, who worship the sacred Ganges. We have not faith enough in the Musketaquid to wash in it even after hoeing. Men stay on shore, keep themselves dry, and drink rum. Pray what were rivers made for? One farmer, who came to bathe in Walden one Sunday while I lived there, told me it was the first bath he had had for fifteen years. Now what kind of religion could his be? or was it any better than a Hindoo's?

July 8, 1853. . . . Toads are still heard occasionally at evening. To-day I heard a hylodetæ peep (perhaps a young one), which have so long been silent.

July 8, 1854. Full moon. By boat to Hubbard's Bend. There is wind, making it cooler and keeping off fog. Delicious on water. The moon reflected from the rippled surface like a

stream of dollars. I hear a few toads still. . . . The bull-frogs trump from time to time. . . . The whippoorwills are heard, and the baying of dogs.

The *Rosa nitida*, I think, has some time done; *lucida* generally now ceasing, and the *Carolina* (?) just begun.

July 8, 1857. . . . Counted the rings of a white-pine stump sawed off last winter at Laurel Glen. It is three and a half feet in diameter and has one hundred and twenty-six rings.

July 9, 1840. In most men's religion the ligature which should be the umbilical cord connecting them with the source of life is rather like that thread which the accomplices of Cylon held in their hands when they went abroad from the temple of Minerva, the other end being attached to the statue of the goddess. Frequently, as in their case, the thread breaks, being stretched, and they are left without an asylum.

The value of many traits in Grecian history depends not so much on their importance as history, as on the readiness with which they accept a wide interpretation, and illustrate the poetry and ethics of mankind. When they announce no particular truth, they are yet central to all truth. . . . Even the isolated and unexplained facts are like the ruins of the temples which in imagination we restore, and ascribe to some Phidias or other master.

The Greeks were boys in the sunshine ; the Romans were men in the field ; the Persians, women in the house ; the Egyptians, old men in the dark.

He who receives an injury is an accomplice of the wrong-doer.

July 9, 1851. When I got out of the cars at Porter's, Cambridge, this morning, I was pleased to see the handsome blue flowers of the succory or endive, *Cichorium intybus*, which reminded me that within the hour I had been whirled into a new botanical region. They must be extremely rare, if they occur at all in Concord. This weed is handsomer than most garden flowers. . . .

Coming out of town willingly as usual, when I saw that reach of Charles River just above the Depot, the fair, still water this cloudy evening suggesting the way to eternal peace and beauty, whence it flows, the placid, lake-like fresh water so unlike the salt brine, affected me not a little. I was reminded of the way in which Wordsworth so coldly speaks of some natural visions or scenes "giving him pleasure." This is perhaps the first vision of elysium on the route from Boston. And just then I saw an encampment of Penobscots, their wigwams appearing above the railroad fence, they, too, looking up the river as they sat on the ground, and enjoying the scene. What can be more impressive than to look up a

noble river just at evening, -- one, perchance, which you have never explored, — and behold its placid waters, reflecting the woods and sky, lapsing inaudibly toward the ocean, to behold it as a lake, but know it as a river, tempting the beholder to explore it and his own destiny at once, haunt of water-fowl. This was above the factories, all that I saw. That water could never have flowed under a factory. How *then* could it have reflected the sky?

July 9, 1852. 4 A. M. To Cliffs. . . . An aurora fading into a general saffron color. At length the redness travels over partly from east to west, before sunrise, and there is little color in the east. The birds all unite to make the morning choir, sing rather faintly, not prolonging their strains. The crickets appear to have received a reinforcement during the sultry night.

There is no name for the evening red corresponding to aurora. It is the blushing foam about the prow of the sun's boat, and at eve, the same in its wake. — I do not often hear the bluebird now except at dawn. — I think we have had no clear winter skies, no skies the color of a robin's egg and pure amber . . . for some months. — These blueberries on Fair Haven have a very innocent, ambrosial taste, as if made of the ether itself, as they plainly are colored with it. . . .

How handsome the leaves of the shrub oak, so clear and unspotted a green, so firm and enduring, glossy, uninjured by the wind, meed for mighty conquerors, lighter on the under-side, which contrast is important. . . . It must be the cuckoo that makes that half-throttled sound at night, for I saw one while he made it this morning, as he flew from an apple-tree when I disturbed him. — Those white water-lilies, what boats! I toss one into the pan half unfolded, and it floats upright like a boat. It is beautiful when half open, and also when fully expanded.

Morton, in his "*Crania Americana*," says, referring to Wilkinson as his authority, that vessels of porcelain of Chinese manufacture have of late been repeatedly found in the catacombs of Thebes in Egypt, some as old as the Pharaonic period, and the inscriptions on them "have been read with ease by Chinese scholars, and in three instances record the following legend, 'The flower opens, and lo! another year.'" There is something sublime in the fact that some of the oldest written sentences should thus celebrate the coming in of spring. How many times have the flowers opened and a new year begun! Hardly a more cheering sentence could have come down to us. How old is spring, a phenomenon still so fresh! Do we perceive any decay in Nature? How much evidence is con-

tained in this short and simple sentence respecting the former inhabitants of this globe! It is a sentence to be inscribed on vessels of porcelain, suggesting that so many years had gone before, in observation as fit then as now.

3 P. M. To Clematis Brook. The heat of to-day, as yesterday, is furnace-like. It produces a thickness almost amounting to vapor in the near horizon. The railroad men cannot work in the Deep Cut, but have come out on to the causeway, where there is a circulation of air. They tell, with a shudder, of the heat reflected from the rails, yet a breezy wind, as if it were born of the heat, rustles all leaves. — Those piles of clouds in the north, assuming interesting forms of unmeasured rocky mountains or unfathomed precipices, light-colored and even downy above, but with watery bases, portend a thunder-shower before night. Well, I can take shelter in some barn or under a bridge. It shall not spoil my afternoon. — I have scarcely heard one strain from the telegraph harp this season. Its string is rusted and slackened, relaxed, and now no more it encourages the walker. So is it with all sublunary things. Every poet's lyre loses its tension. It cannot bear the alternate contraction and expansion of the seasons. — How intense and suffocating the heat under some sunny woodsidcs where no breeze circulates!

The red lily with its torrid color and sun-freckled spots, dispensing, too, with the outer garment of a calyx, its petals so open and wide apart that you can see through it in every direction, tells of hot weather. It is of a handsome bell shape, so upright, and the flower prevails over every other part. It belongs not to spring.

It is refreshing to see the surface of Fair Haven rippled with wind. The waves break here quite as on the sea shore, and with like effects. This little brook makes great sands comparatively at its mouth, which the waves of the pond wash up and break upon like a sea.

Bathing is an undescribed luxury. To feel the wind blow on your body, and the water flow upon you and lave you, is a rare physical enjoyment this hot day. . . .

Low hills or even hillocks which are stone-capped (have rocky summits), as this near James Baker's, remind me of mountains, which in fact they are on a small scale, — the brows of earth, round which the trees and bushes trail like the hair of eyebrows, outside bald places, temples, primitive places where lichens grow. I have some of the same sensations as if I sat on the top of the Rocky Mountains. Some low places thus give a sense of elevation.

July 9, 1854. . . . Examined a lanceolate thistle which has been pressed and has lain by a

year. The papers being taken off, its head sprang up more than an inch, and the downy seeds began to fly off.

July 9, 1857. . . . P. M. Up Assabet with S——. There is now but little black willow down left on the trees. I think I see how this tree is propagated by its seeds. Its countless, minute, brown seeds, just perceptible to the naked eye in the midst of their cotton, are wafted with the cotton to the water (most abundantly about a fortnight ago), and then they drift and form a thick white scum together with other matter, especially against some alder or other fallen or drooping shrub where there is less current than usual. There within two or three days a great many germinate and show their two little roundish leaves, more or less tinged with green the surface of the scum, somewhat like grass seed in a tumbler of cotton. Many of these are drifted in amid the button-bushes, willows, and other shrubs, and the sedge along the river side, and the water falling just at this time when they have put forth little fibres, they are deposited on the mud just left bare in the shade, and thus probably a great many of them have a chance to become perfect plants. But if they do not drift into sufficiently shallow water, and are not left on the mud just at the right time, probably they perish. The mud in many such places

is now green with them, though perhaps the seed has often blown thither directly through the air. — I am surprised to see dense groves of young maples an inch or more high from seed of this year. They have sprung in pure sand where the seed has been drifted and moisture enough supplied, at the water's edge. The seed, now effete, commonly lies on the surface, having sent down its rootlet into the sand.

July 10, 1840. To myself I am as pliant as an osier, and my courses seem not so easy to be calculated as that of Encke's comet, but I am powerless to bend the character of another. He is like iron in my hands. I could tame a hyena more easily than my friend. He is material which no tool of mine will work. A naked savage will fell an oak with a firebrand, and wear a hatchet out of the rock, but I cannot hew the smallest chip out of the character of my fellow to beautify or deform it.

Nothing was ever so unfamiliar and startling to me as my own thoughts.

We know men through their eyes. You might say that the eye was always original and unlike another. It is the feature of the individual, and not of the family ; in twins, still different. All a man's privacy is in his eye, and its expression he cannot alter more than he can alter his character. So long as we look a man in the eye, it

seems to rule the other features, and make them, too, original. When I have mistaken one person for another, observing only his form and carriage and inferior features, the unlikeness seemed of the least consequence, but when I caught his eye and my doubts were removed, it seemed to pervade every feature. The eye revolves on an independent pivot which we can no more control than our own will. Its axle is the axle of the soul, as the axis of the earth is coincident with the axis of the heavens.

July 10-12, 1841. . . . A slight sound at evening lifts me up by the ears, and makes life seem inexpressibly serene and grand. It may be in Uranus, or it may be in the shutter. It is the original sound of which all literature is the echo. It makes all fear superfluous. Bravery comes from further than the sources of fear.

July 10, 1851. A gorgeous sunset after rain, with horizontal bars of cloud, red sashes to the western window, barry clouds hanging like a curtain over the window of the west, damask. First there is a low arch of the storm clouds, under which is seen the clearer, fairer, serener sky and more distant sunset clouds, and under all, on the horizon's edge, heavier, massive dark clouds not to be distinguished from the mountains. How many times I have seen this kind of sunset, the most gorgeous sight in Nature. From the hill

behind Minot's I see the birds flying against this red sky ; one looks like a bat. Now between two stupendous mountains of the low stratum under the evening red, clothed in slightly roseaceous, amber light, through a magnificent gorge, far, far away, as perchance may occur in pictures of the Spanish coast viewed from the Mediterranean, I see a city, the eternal city of the West, the phantom city, in whose streets no traveler has trod, over whose pavement the horses of the sun have already hurried, some Salamanca of the imagination. But it lasts only for a moment, for now the changing light has wrought such changes in it that I see the resemblance no longer. A softer amber sky than in any picture. The swallows are improving this short day, twittering as they fly, the huckleberry-bird repeats his jingling strain, and I hear the notes of the song-sparrow more honest-sounding than most. — I am always struck by the centrality of the observer's position. He always stands fronting the middle of the arch, and does not suspect at first that a thousand observers from a thousand hills behold the sunset sky from equally favorable positions.

And now I turn and observe the dark masses of the trees in the east, not green, but black. While the sun was setting in the west, the trees were rising in the east.

I perceive that the low stratum of dark clouds under the red sky all dips one way, and to a remarkable degree presents the appearance of the butt ends of cannons slanted towards the sky. Such uniformity on a large scale is unexpected, and pleasant to detect, evincing the simplicity of the laws of their formation. Uniformity in the shapes of clouds of a single stratum is always to be detected, the same wind shaping clouds of the same consistency and in like positions. No doubt an experienced observer could discover the states of the upper atmosphere by studying the forms and characters of the clouds. I traced the distinct form of the cannon in seven instances, stretching over the whole length of the cloud many a mile in the horizon.

July 10, 1852. Another day, if possible, still hotter than the last. We have already had three or four such, and still no rain. The soil under the sward in the yard is dusty as an ash-heap for a foot in depth, and the young trees are suffering and dying.

2 P. M. To the North River, in front of Major Bassett's. It is with a suffocating sensation, and a slight pain in the head, that I walk the Union Turnpike where the heat is reflected from the road. The leaves of the elms on the dry highways begin to roll up. I have to lift my hat to let the air cool my head. But I find a re-

freshing breeze from over the river and meadow. In the hottest day you can be comfortable in the shade on the open shore of a pond or river, where a zephyr comes over the water sensibly cooled by it ; that is, if the water is deep enough to cool it. I find the white melilot, *Melilotus leucantha*, a fragrant clover, in blossom by the roadside. We turn aside by a large rye-field near the old Lee place. The rye-fields are now quite yellow and ready for the sickle. Already there are many flavous colors in the landscape, much maturity of small seeds. The nodding heads of the rye make an agreeable maze to the eye. I hear now the huckleberry bird, the red-eye, and the oven-bird. The robin, methinks, is oftener heard of late, even at noon. . . . The long, narrow, open intervals in the woods near the Assabet are quite dry now, in some parts yellow with the upright loosestrife. One of these meadows, a quarter of a mile long, by a few rods wide, narrow and winding, and bounded on all sides by maples showing the under-sides of their leaves, swamp white-oaks, with their glossy dark-green leaves, birches, etc., and full of meadow-sweet just coming into bloom, and cranberry vines, and a dry kind of grass, is a very attractive place to walk in. We undressed on this side, carried our clothes down in the stream a considerable distance, and

finally bathed in earnest from the opposite side. The heat tempted us to prolong this luxury. . . . I made quite an excursion up and down the river in the water, a fluvial . . . walk. It seemed the properest highway for this weather, now in water a foot or two deep, now suddenly descending through valleys up to my neck, but all alike agreeable. Sometimes the bottom looked as if covered with large, flat, sharp-edged rocks. I could break off cakes three or four inches thick, and a foot or two square. It was a conglomeration . . . of sand and pebbles, as it were cemented with oxide of iron (?), quite red with it, iron colored to the depth of an inch on the upper-side, a hard kind of pan covering or forming the bottom in many places. . . . There are many interesting objects of study, as you walk up and down a clear river like this in the water, where you can see every inequality in the bottom, and every object on it. The breams' nests are interesting and even handsome, and the shallow water in them over the sand is so warm to my hand that I think their ova will soon be hatched ; also, the numerous heaps of stones, made I know not certainly by what fish, many of them rising above the surface. There are weeds on the bottom which remind you of the sea ; the radical leaves of the floating heart which I have never seen mentioned, very large,

five inches long and four wide, dull claret (and green when freshest), pellucid, with waved edges, in large tufts or dimples on the bottom, oftenest without the floating leaves, like lettuce, or some kelps, or carrageen moss (?). The bottom is also scored with furrows made by the clams moving about, sometimes a rod long, and always the clam lies at one end. So this fish can change its position, and get into deeper and cooler water. I was in doubt before whether the clam made these furrows; for one, apparently fresh, that I examined, had a "mud clam" at the end, but these, which were very numerous, had living clams. — There are but few fishes to be seen. They have, no doubt, retreated to the deepest water. In one somewhat muddier place close to the shore I came upon an old pout cruising with her young. She dashed away at my approach, but the fry remained. They were of various sizes, from one third of an inch to one and a half inches, quite black and pout-shaped, except that the head was most developed in the smallest. They were constantly moving about in a somewhat circular or rather lenticular school, about fifteen or eighteen inches in diameter, and I estimated that there were at least one thousand of them. Presently the old pout came back and took the lead of her brood, which followed her, or rather gathered about her, like

chickens about a hen; but this mother had so many children she did n't know what to do. Her maternal yearnings must be on a great scale. When one half of the divided school found her out they came down upon her and completely invested her like a small cloud. She was soon joined by another smaller pout, apparently her mate, and all, both old and young, began to be very familiar with me. They came round my legs and felt them with their feelers, and the old pouts nibbled my toes, while the fry half concealed my feet. Probably if I had been standing on the bank, with my clothes on, they would have been more shy. Ever and anon the old pouts dashed aside to drive away a passing bream or perch. The larger one kept circling about her charge as if to keep them together within a certain compass. If any of her flock were lost or drowned she would hardly have missed them. I wondered if there was any calling of the roll at night; whether she, like a faithful shepherdess, ever told her tale under some hawthorn in the river dales. Ever ready to do battle with the wolves that might break into her fold. The young pouts are protected then for a season by the old. Some had evidently been hatched before the others. One of these large pouts had a large velvet black spot which included the right pectoral fin, -- a

kind of disease which I have often observed on them. — I wonder if any Roman emperor ever indulged in such a luxury as this — of walking up and down a river in torrid weather with only a hat to shade the head. What were the baths of Caracalla to this? Now we traverse a long watery plain some two feet deep; now we descend into a dark river valley, where the bottom is lost sight of and the water rises to our armpits; now we go over a hard iron pan; now we stoop and go under a low bough of the *Salix nigra*; now we slump into soft mud, amid the pads of the *Nymphæa odorata*, at this hour shut. On this road there is no other traveler to turn out for. We finally return to the dry land and recline in the shade of an apple-tree on a bank overlooking the meadow. When I first came out of the water the short, wiry grass was burning hot to my feet, and my skin was soon parched and dry in the sun. — I still hear the bobolink. . . . The stones lying in the sun on this hillside, where the grass has been cut, are as hot to the hand as an egg just boiled, and very uncomfortable to hold; so do they absorb the heat. Every hour do we expect a thunder-shower to cool the air, but none comes. We say they are gone down the river.

. . . St. John's-wort is perhaps the prevailing flower now. Many fields are very yellow with

it. In one such I was surprised to see rutabaga turnips growing well and showing no effects of drouth, and still more surprised when the farmer . . . showed me, with his hoe, that the earth was quite fresh and moist there only an inch beneath the surface. This he thought was the result of keeping the earth loose by cultivation.

July 10, 1853. . . . The bream poised over its sandy nest on waving fin — how aboriginal! So it was poised here and watched its ova before the new world was known to the old. Still I see the little cavities of their nests along the shore.

July 10, 1854. . . . The singing birds at present are (villageous) robin, chip-bird, warbling vireo, swallows; (rural) song-sparrow, seringo, flicker, king-bird, goldfinch, link of bobolink; cherry-bird; (sylvan) red-eye, tanager, wood-thrush, chewink, veery, oven-bird, all even at mid-day, cat-bird (full strain), whippoorwill, crows.

July 10, 1856. . . . 5 P. M. Up Assabet. As I was bathing under the swamp white-oaks at 6 P. M. heard a suppressed sound, often repeated, like perhaps the working of beer through a bung-hole, which I already suspected to be produced by owls. I was uncertain whether it was far or near. Proceeding a dozen rods up stream on the south side, toward where a cat-bird was inces-

santly mewing, I found myself suddenly within a rod of a gray screech-owl, sitting on an alder bough, with horns erect, turning its head from side to side, and up and down, and peering at me in that same ludicrously solemn and complacent way that I had noticed in one in captivity. Another, more red, also horned, repeated the same warning sound, an apparent call to its young, about the same distance off, in another direction, on an alder. When they took to flight, they made some noise with their wings. With their short tails and squat figures they looked very clumsy, all head and shoulders. Hearing a fluttering under the alders, I drew near and found a young owl, a third smaller than the red, all gray, without obvious horns, only four or five feet distant. It flitted along two rods, and I followed it. I saw at least two or more young. . . . These birds kept opening their eyes when I moved, as if to get a clearer sight of me. The young were very quick to notice any motion of the old, and so betrayed their return by looking in that direction when they returned, though I had not heard it. Though they permitted me to come near with so much noise, as if bereft of half their senses, they at once noticed the coming and going of the old birds, even when I did not. There were four or five owls in all. I have heard a some-

what similar note further off, and louder, in the night.

July 10, 1860. . . . This cloudy, cool afternoon I was exhilarated by the mass of cheerful, bright yellowish light reflected from the sedge, *Carex Pennsylvanica* growing densely on hillsides laid bare within a year or two. It is of a distinct, cheerful, yellow color, even this overcast day, as if it were reflecting a bright sunlight, though no sun is visible. It is surprising how much this will light up a hillside, or upland hollow or plateau, and when, in a clear day, you look toward the sun over it late in the afternoon, the scene is incredibly bright and elysian.

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